Serving *the* Amish

A Cultural Guide for Professionals

James A. Cates

VISIT…

Serving the Amish

Young Center Books in Anabaptist & Pietist Studies

Donald B. Kraybill, *Series Editor*

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Preface

An Amish adolescent with an artistic bent ends his eighth and final year of education in an Amish school. His teacher sponsors an art contest, and he is (humility aside) the odds-on favorite to win. His entry consists of a log cabin constructed entirely of paper. Tightly rolled sheets form logs for the walls, a faux brick chimney perches at one end, and door and windows are carefully cut and framed. The roof hinges to allow an inner view, where one finds intricately crafted paper furniture, almost all items modest and utilitarian accessories.

The cabin takes second place. It would have swept the field, the artist is told, but for a single feature. In one corner he chose to include a television, and since such "worldly" pursuits are forbidden, he cannot be awarded first prize.

I frequently use this story to begin talks about the Amish, for it neatly symbolizes their view. "The world" has a place: second place. As human service providers we offer much to Amish communities. They may learn from us, work with us, and be grateful for our friendship and support. In turn, we learn much from them. As with any culture, immersing ourselves in an understanding of the Amish worldview broadens our insights and perceptions of ourselves. And yet there will always be a distance. By virtue of the choice to be who they are, there are psychological, social, and emotional separations that defy our full understanding.

The art story is important in another way as well. It reminds us that the child's journey to that integral separation is neither straightforward nor consistent. The artist was in his early teens when he was gently reminded

of the expectations of his sect. He is now a young adult, and I have had the opportunity to watch him, along with many other adolescents, mature and develop his views. There is an ebb and flow in their embrace of the world, dependent on factors known and unknown, seen and unseen. The social roles—child, adolescent, adult, male and female, lay member and clergy—that shape our interactions with Amish people are complex and fluid. A deep grasp of Amish culture requires drawing from still another tradition—a Zen attitude of patient acquiescence to live within these ever-changing currents.

This multifaceted separation entails another principle that is difficult for mainstream American providers to grasp. From cradle to grave, the Amish are immersed in a communal society. Getting second place in an art contest for including a television did more than simply remind the young artist that such media violates the rules. It reinforced for him, and for every student in the school, that being Amish is a lifestyle predicated on certain expectations. To be a part of the community is to fulfill these expectations. To stray from them is to be reminded—at times gently (as with a young adolescent not yet baptized into the church), at times harshly (as with an adult member who violates the rules in an egregious manner)—that one's first loyalty is to the community. As mainstream Americans, we take our individualism for granted. A public school art contest without specific rules would include a panoply of media, subjects, and designs. The Amish contest described did not need specific rules, for the scholars (as the Amish call their students) knew the moral limits to media and subject matter available. There is room for individual navigation within this collective system, but the community keeps a watchful eye on just how far an individual strays.

This book details hard-won principles for care and interaction with Amish people in human service and health care settings—interactions that often fall uncomfortably outside the daily routines of the Amish and the professionals who serve them. These are anxious moments in which outside "worldly" interests intrude most forcefully into Amish lives and traditions. The primary principles of this project rest on a foundation of treatment, care, and professional interaction that are germane to working with any group. Still, these generic formulas must be adapted in sensitive ways to meet the distinctive needs and cultural patterns of Amish people. With that purpose in mind, I use ample anecdotal evidence and first-person narratives (each disguised to protect the actual participants)

to illustrate the culturally specific modes of professional interaction essential for effectively serving members of this unique American subculture.

What are the key features that distinguish professionals who are capable of crossing over cultural barriers? In *Serving the Amish* I argue that effective professional care requires more than a rudimentary grasp of Amish cultural values and social practices. I make the distinction between *respecting* and *accepting* the beliefs of clients who live in a very different world than the professionals who serve them. Professional service providers can learn to respect the beliefs of different cultural groups while not accepting them as their own. Regardless of the particular field, three principles of care are essential to developing an effective professional relationship with Amish people.

First, there is no such thing as a "simple" interaction. In a collective society like the Amish, the intricacies of a single relationship spread like ripples from a stone tossed into a quiet pond. Based on their experience, Amish people are quick to label agencies and professionals with positive or pejorative adjectives. In a face-to-face society based on oral communication, these tags become potent pointers that guide others toward or away from a particular provider or agency.

Second, virtually all professional care revolves around the integrity of relationships. However, in the context of Amish culture integrity requires a degree of transparency from service providers that non-Amish clients and patients would not anticipate or even consider comfortable. It is not a matter of professionals sharing more of their personal experiences. Rather, it is a subtle "shedding" of the professional persona. For example, I often feel myself slipping into "therapist mode" as someone talks, analyzing information, developing and discarding hypotheses, and making clinical interpretations as I prepare to respond. It is a role that serves me well in many situations, but it is also a "role" in a professional interaction. The Amish do not parse interpersonal experience into discrete roles. They are the same person across family, church, and business. The differentiation of roles is what distinguishes professional providers as agents of the outside world. Providers most capable of being genuine and real across different social settings—who can subtly shed some of their professional persona—have the greatest access to and success in Amish communities.

Third, many standard protocols and professional procedures need to be modified to respect Amish spiritual beliefs and cultural practices in order

to achieve successful interventions. I offer examples of how providers of professional care can develop creative ways of interacting and providing services in the context of Amish culture. It is easy to observe the external manifestations of cultural separation that mark the Amish lifestyle—buggies, bonnets, beards, and one-room schools. As Susan Trollinger notes in *Selling the Amish*, "Their commitment, now more than a century old, to carrying out a separate existence by dressing, farming, driving, speaking, and so forth in ways visibly and audibly different from those of the larger culture within which they live serves as irrefutable testimony to their understanding of the power of appearance. . . . To a great extent, style makes the Amish who they are, insofar as it marks them as other, as a distinctive community living their Christian commitment in a particular way" (2012, 80–81). Yet beneath these prominent symbols of "otherness" lie universal needs, emotions, and desires that serve as a common ground for those seeking to work and care for Amish people on a regular basis. In short, this book explores the cultural context of Amish life and offers suggestions to modify customary protocols and programs in order to better meet the universal needs that lie beneath the bonnets and beards.

To accommodate the interests and needs of various busy professional providers the book is divided into four sections. Part I, a single chapter, offers a brief overview of Amish society that emphasizes the social and social-psychological factors that influence their worldview. Part II begins with a chapter that traces recent changes in Amish attitudes toward mental health—a significant transition pertinent to professionals in various health and social services. Chapter 3 then explores how non-Amish service providers can build and maintain rapport with these clients and patients. The next chapters highlight topic areas of key importance to providers: perceptions of the lifespan, gender roles, sexuality, social trauma, and grief. The chapters in Part III are relevant for particular professions—psychotherapists, addictions, law enforcement / judiciary, healthcare, and social services—but include many overlapping interests as well. Part IV includes practical "hands on" guidelines for both personal and programmatic interventions for all human service professionals who desire to provide effective care for Amish people.

There are many excellent in-depth scholarly studies and other overviews of the Amish lifestyle and traditions; however, none of those provides an interpretive cultural perspective with direct relevance and sug-

gestions for professional practice. With this book, I seek to fill this gap by providing professionals in various fields with a careful description, sensitive analysis, and practical guidelines for successful interventions in this distinctive American subculture. The chapters of this book are in many ways an expanded "case study" that provides a foundation for future research efforts. My hope is to see at least some of the principles espoused here subjected to field methods, if not more rigorous testing, by researchers as the next logical steps in building our knowledge about best practices for quality services.

Although I have visited with Amish people and those who serve them in numerous communities in other states, my professional practice experience is grounded in northeastern Indiana, a region with some 35,000 Amish. My work in this region involves a variety of different Amish groups from the "low," or conservative groups in Allen and Adams counties to the "high," or progressive groups in Elkhart and LaGrange counties. As such, the vignettes in this book reflect diverse cultural practices and perceptions of the Amish people in this large region. Although the lessons of my interactions emerge from these particular cultural grounds, they are generalizable principles that are applicable to communities and subgroups far beyond Indiana. A few examples of particular practices may fail to translate culturally to certain Amish subgroups in other states, but the basic cultural values and religious beliefs of Amish life are similar regardless of region or local church affiliation. Thus the foundational principles that I delineate are applicable and relevant for professional service providers relating to all Amish settlements across North America.

Several persons who read early drafts of this work commented on the risk of speaking so openly about problems the Amish face. I am reminded of a plaque that a mentor, a former Catholic priest and recovering alcoholic, kept behind his desk: "I would hate to have lived without disturbing anyone." Growth, both personal and professional, has come when I grapple with issues that disturb me as well as others. While I genuinely hope you are not offended by what is said here, I do hope you grapple with what it means to care for and serve Amish people in culturally sensitive and effective ways.

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Acknowledgments

To my awareness, no one has ever acknowledged furniture. And yet I owe an overwhelming debt to one piece in particular—the kitchen table.

The genesis of this book emerged around kitchen tables, and without that furnishing I cannot imagine forming the ideas that underlie this writing. It was around these tables in Amish homes that I talked and learned. Their desire for humility constrains me from mentioning by name those who have repeatedly opened their houses and hearts to my visits, but many times I have found myself talking, laughing, and crying there. Without these interactions, the knowledge gained to write these chapters would never have unfolded.

The seminal work that inspired this book was a team effort. I thank Norm Kauffmann for his energy and foresight. Shirley Carey gave unselfishly of her time and energy, and for that I am grateful. And Chris Weber could write his own book if he ever took the time. His ongoing insights, comments, and willingness to process with me are present throughout these pages.

Symbolically, I have sat at the kitchen table with two men whose expertise enlivens not just this work but the work of so many who wish to understand the Amish. The tables we have shared range from coffee shops, to restaurants, to the very homes mentioned above. And in each setting I have seen their gift with this complex people. Steve Nolt has given willingly of his time and effort to assist me in understanding those I strive to serve. And Donald Kraybill has been a strong support, not just of me, but of the effort to increase the role of social justice among the Amish. I thank both of you for all you do.

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Several others remain who in very different ways contributed to this book. My late wife, Linda Graham, taught me so much about the Amish. I am ever grateful to her. My late mentor, Jack Ryan, taught me so much about social justice. I am ever grateful to him. My friend Jeanette Boerger has stood by me through this entire effort. My thanks to her especially. And as professionals in the field of mental health, my thanks to John Newbauer and John Link. You taught me what it means to be a pro.

I have one other acknowledgment to an entity rather than a person. This book was created in Saugatuck, a small town on the Kalamazoo River near Lake Michigan. It has been a special place, offering a placid retreat to work on the manuscript over the past few years. Fittingly, I write these words while my laptop sits on a kitchen table there.

The difficulty with acknowledgments is the inevitable need to omit important names. Suffice it to say, to all who have shared with me at kitchen tables over the years and to all who will share in the future, my humble thanks for your presence.

CHAPTER 1

Strangers and Pilgrims

Standing in the kitchen of her modest home, she faced the deacon, the red hues of western light fading through the windows. This quiet homemaker also stood at the end of one journey and the beginning of another. Raised Amish, baptized into the church in her late teens, married shortly after, and now the mother of five, she had intended to remain in this life for the rest of her years. And yet in her early forties, she heard the words that placed her under the *Bann*—formal excommunication.

Her husband had struggled for many years with a drug addiction and had left some time before, already under the Bann. The church provided support for the family he left behind, but her spiritual search increasingly led to questions about the role a single woman was expected to play. Hoping for compromise, she approached her bishop but to no avail. To stay in good standing, she must conform to expectations.

The conflict was a slow and wary dissent for many years. The clergy leveled comments and criticisms, but she remained unfazed. The first formal discipline was *Unfriddah*, a rebuke in which she was denied the holy kiss in church and given an opportunity to bring her behavior in line with expectations. Instead, she forced the issue, missing semiannual communion three times, an act that initiated excommunication in her community.

Dramatists narrate such moments for maximum effect and to forward a plot. In reality, this end is anticlimactic. The pain of the Bann is anticipated by all parties. The formal announcement merely becomes necessary documentation. In this case, her children and the deacon's had played together when they were younger. They were fellow par-

ents and friends, making his responsibility to enforce the Bann even more painful. Per protocol, she was given six weeks to explain her actions, to confess, and to seek forgiveness from the church before permanent separation ensued, but both knew her decision was final. The Amish church was in her past, and these were the last moments she would spend there. Two friends, two parents, two members of a community, they stood in awkward silence before the deacon said good-bye and wished her well, tears in his eyes.

Those who grasp the unique and powerful hold of Amish culture understand the import of this vignette. This woman did not merely become disillusioned with a church doctrine, choosing, for example, to leave Catholicism to become Lutheran. She became disillusioned with a lifestyle and chose to leave religious beliefs, family, friends, parents, neighbors, and the cohesion within this dense social network that had nurtured and supported her life for many years. It is a disturbing rejection of the beliefs and hopes that bind Amish communities together when a member who has invested many years in their faith chooses to enter the wider world. When the unbaptized young reject the church in this way, it is an unfortunate event that reflects the quixotic thinking of youth. When a church member makes such a decision, however, the ramifications are even more distressing because the exit breaks the member's baptismal promise to follow Jesus and obey the teachings of the church for life.

This vignette suggests three principles essential to understanding the role of human services for the Amish in the twenty-first century. First, the church is synonymous with community and, as such, is primary, essential, and integral in their lives. In fact, the Amish use a single word, *Gmay* (a dialect abbreviation of community), to refer to both church and community. Members of their local congregation—family and neighbors—live nearby. Thus, their daily social and familial life is intertwined in their religious identity. God's kingdom on earth is represented by the Christian church, and the Amish have established their version of his kingdom.[1]

Second, no humanly sanctioned organization, not even government, can usurp the authority of this religious order. An ultimate commitment to God's kingdom is the primary principle that guides Amish behavior and communal life. Some cautiously work with outside organizations, but when external authorities (cultural, economic, or the state) conflict

with Amish moral values, their ultimate allegiance is to the church, even if that means sitting in jail as they did in the mid-twentieth century to protest the encroachment of public education. Anyone seeking to work effectively with Amish people must grasp the fundamental church loyalty that is entrenched in their culture and minds.

Third, the Amish are a communal group, not in an economic sense but in its collective accent on the authority of the Gmay over the individual. In contrast to mainstream culture's narcissistic emphasis on me first, in Amish life the church-community comes first, then the family, and finally the individual. When young adults decide to join the church, they make a lifelong commitment at baptism to obey its teachings and practices. The twin virtues of humility and obedience in Amish life stand in opposition to the unbridled individualism that permeates much of mainstream society. This communal dimension raises complicated questions for service providers who themselves are immersed in the values and rhetoric of self-actualizing individualism.

Amish Roots and Distinctives

The term "Amish" identifies a small Christian church numbering nearly 300,000 with some forty different "orders," or tribes.[2] The Amish and their religious cousins, the Mennonites, trace their roots to the Anabaptist ("rebaptizer") movement that emerged in South Germany and Switzerland in 1525 on the coattails of the Protestant Reformation. About 165 years later, the Amish branched off from the Swiss Mennonites under the leadership of Jakob Ammann, a new convert to Anabaptism who was soon ordained as an elder. Ammann proposed further religious reforms and urged the older Swiss Mennonite leaders to practice a sharper separation from the world and a more severe shunning of unrepentant members. When the older church leaders failed to heed his call, Ammann and his followers branched off in 1693 to begin what is now known as the Amish church.[3]

The Amish and other Anabaptists endured severe persecution for their "heretical" religious beliefs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Frequent migration, economic instability, and the turbulence of endless warfare made settlement in North America enticing. Thus the Amish were primed to accept William Penn's offer of religious tolerance in Pennsylvania. Beginning in the 1740s and continuing until mid-nineteenth century,

Amish people came to North America in several waves. Their last congregation in Europe died out in 1936. Today the Amish live in over 475 settlements in thirty states and the Canadian province of Ontario. Nearly two-thirds claim Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Ohio as their home.[4] The Amish are one of numerous plain-dressing Anabaptist churches that practice simplicity of life and draw a clear line of separation from the world. (See Appendix A.)

In the twenty-first century, the signature symbol of Amish life is the use of horse and buggy transportation. Their pacifist stance, most obvious in times of patriotic fervor, is a central tenet of their religious faith. Other marks of Amish culture include rejecting electricity from the public grid, speaking Pennsylvania German, and wearing plain dress prescribed by the church. These practices were brought into sharp relief over the past one hundred years as motorized transportation and use of electricity became the sine qua non of daily life for Americans.

The Amish church has no national bureaucracy or centralized ecclesiastical authority. Instead, religious authority rests in 2,000-plus small congregations that share a common set of beliefs. Despite a common core, daily practice varies considerably among congregations. These practices are codified in the *Ordnung*, an oral tradition that provides guidelines for living that prescribe, among other things, the color and style of clothes, the order of worship, the use of technology, and acceptable interactions with the outside world. The regulations also proscribe higher education, divorce, military service, jewelry and other specific practices and customs. Although Ordnung details vary by community, the basic cultural contours of Amish life—horse-drawn transportation, German dialect, distinctive dress, rejection of high school, worship in homes, and lay clergy—are similar across all congregations.

Yielding to the Ordnung is considered an imitation of Christ, who willingly submitted to God, even to the point of death. These guidelines for individual and corporate living, approved in member's meetings of the church, carry powerful religious legitimation. Community expectations and peer pressure also nudge members to follow the communal norms. Nevertheless, there is ample room for individual choice, creativity, and expression inside the Amish moral order. Despite superficial appearances, Amish society does not exercise authoritarian control that relegates members to blind obedience.

Pilgrims and Strangers

Amish culture and social norms are an expression of an underlying package of religious beliefs and commitments. Comprehending how those commitments shape their worldview is crucial to providing effective and culturally sensitive services and care. Understanding the religious underpinnings is exemplified by the parable of the blindfolded men, each grasping and exploring a single body part of an elephant and then extrapolating a description of the animal in exquisite detail. I continue to be startled by the perceptions of fellow professionals and experts as they discuss interactions with Amish people. The "animal" they describe in no way resembles the cultural beast I have been exploring with such care! And yet the longer we talk, the more I recognize the outlines of a common yet elusive culture.

I have identified ten features of Amish religion that have been helpful in my journey to understand the inner world that shapes Amish feelings and perceptions.[5] The list is not an exhaustive recitation of important beliefs, certainly not everything about Amish religion you may want to know, yet these have been helpful to me.

1. *We are only pilgrims and strangers on a heavenward journey.* Amish people frequently use this biblical phrase to describe their way of life. Three core beliefs are encapsulated in this phrase. First, "this world" is not their home. Second, they are pilgrims on a journey, just passing through. Since they are strangers they are careful not to take the world too seriously. Finally, their ultimate destination is heaven. The decisions they make and the practices they pursue are shaped by this eternal goal.
2. *We are a "separate" and a "peculiar people."* Because they are transients, they heed biblical admonitions to "love not the world neither the things that are in the world," to "be not conformed to this world," and other New Testament teachings that advise Christians to separate themselves from the world. Perhaps no verse is as clear in this demand as is Peter's blunt call: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). The Amish see themselves

as a *peculiar* people who have been called out of the *darkness* of this world.

3. *God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. His eye is quite literally on the sparrow.* What we might see as fatalism is, in the minds of the devout church member, an unshakeable faith in the vast wisdom and presence of God. When my wife died of a malignant brain tumor, friends and family came together from a variety of spiritual backgrounds, all attempting to make sense of a senseless loss. I was deeply moved by the grief of her Amish friends but also struck by their steadfast belief that God was active in her death every bit as much as in her life. In their view, God's guiding hand in all that happens in our lives simply transcends our understanding, and must be accepted by faith.
4. *To be humble is to model one's life after Jesus.* His life as recorded in the Gospels was plain, modest, and focused on the welfare of others. This is the humility that the Amish strive to attain in their daily lives and is a requirement for healthy communal living. Expressions of pride and individualism threaten the harmony of the church-community.
5. *Any "assurance of salvation" is seen as pride; one can only hope for an eternity with God.* The Amish are quick to say that God has forgiven their sins, rather than asserting their assurance of salvation as many conservative Christians do. They simply say, with deep humility, that they have a living hope that God will be a kind and merciful judge. Likewise, they conspicuously downplay evangelistic fervor because it encourages individualistic expressions that would wreak havoc in a communal society that requires bending to the will of the church-community. The heavenward journey demands daily effort to follow the ways of Jesus and to yield to the wisdom of elders handed down over the generations.
6. *Amish practice adult believer's baptism.* Young adults from about age sixteen to their mid-twenties need to decide if they will join the Amish church. On average about 90 percent do. Baptism requires not only a confession of faith but a promise on bended knees to support and comply with church regulations for the rest of their life. Prior to their baptism, young people enter a period of *Rumspringa* (running around) when they are free to socialize with their

friends without direct parental supervision. Rumspringa is one of the most misunderstood phases of Amish life. Rarely do adolescents sever family ties and leave home. During this time the vast majority continue to live at home and socialize and work within the community. They simply have some freedom from the strictures and rules that have been in place since childhood. As they get older, pressure mounts to make a decision to join—or if they do not join in a timely manner, to leave.

7. *Significant sins require public confession before the church.* Confession may be voluntary, a decision to share publicly a personal struggle or guilt that has plagued the individual. It may also be required by the clergy in response to sins uncovered within the community. In either case, depending on the nature and severity of the sin, the person confessing may sit on a bench in front of the assembled church or kneel (for more severe transgressions). The exact nature of the sin may either be shared with the members or reserved for the clergy alone. Atonement may require a simple request for forgiveness; more serious deviance may result in a six-week ban, a temporary excommunication.
8. *Church discipline may involve excommunication and shunning.* In cases where a member is not contrite and refuses to confess error, the church will excommunicate them or they may withdraw. In either case long-standing Amish policy requires that they be shunned to remind them that they have broken a baptismal vow made to God and the community. Ideally, shunning is done in a spirit of love with the hope of restoring the fallen one to membership. Typically it involves rituals of shaming at public events, such as not eating at the same table or engaging in economic transactions with members. However, shunning does not eliminate social interaction. The severity varies greatly by church affiliation and the feelings of the extended family.
9. *Closed communion is celebrated in the spring and fall.* Members of the church-community must be "in agreement" (in harmony), with their offenses forgiven and disagreements minimized, before the congregation can proceed with communion. Churches handle unresolved disagreements in different ways. The members of some churches grumble about the "forced" resolution of controversies to

create agreement and allow communion to occur. Other churches fail to observe communion for many months as a conflict simmers in their midst.

10. *Amish are a patriarchal society.* Church authority is anchored by senior bishops who hold greater authority in meetings of clergy; bishops, ministers, and deacons who hold authority in the individual church; and husbands / fathers within the family who remain subordinate to the church hierarchy. The bishop's exercise of authority varies between and within Amish groups and by personality and disposition. Women vote in church business meetings and nominate men for ordination, but they are not permitted to hold clerical roles.

Social Architecture

The basic social building block is the family, which includes parents who have married for life and, on average, five to eight children.[6] The second social unit is the extended family. Close bonds link adult siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins, making the extended family a key component of social networks. In fact, a middle-aged married person may have 250 people—aunts, uncles, first cousins, and in-laws—in their primary family circle. The Gmay, the local congregation of twenty-five to thirty-five households, is the third building block. Households live in relative close proximity, intermingled with non-Amish neighbors. They gather for worship every other Sunday in homes, shops, barns, or basements as services rotate among homes throughout the year. A Gmay typically consists of 75 to 150 children and adults, depending on the size of the community. When a congregation grows too large to meet in homes, it divides amicably along new geographic lines.

A congregation normally has a complement of four to five "ministers"—a bishop, a deacon, and two or three preachers. The bishop leads the congregation and administers rituals such as baptism, weddings, funerals, and excommunication. The deacon attends to the financial needs of members related to health care, disability, and fire or storm damage. Each clergyman is chosen by drawing lots from a pool of nominees, following an old biblical tradition. Both men and women may nominate married men of good standing as candidates. The nominees each select a hymnal from a batch of shuffled hymnals corresponding to the number of candidates. The candi-

date who selects a book marked by a hidden slip of paper is immediately ordained. This emotionally intense ritual, transacted in ninety minutes, invokes the belief that God reaches down from heaven to select the next servant for the congregation. The process eliminates campaigning for the position and grants the new minister divine legitimation for his tasks.

No ritual of heritage and identity has been as resistant to change as worship.[7] Each church holds a three-hour, biweekly service that allows visits on alternate Sundays with family and friends in other churches. The ritual consists of hymns, a short and a long sermon, followed by a communal meal and visiting. The *Ausbund*, a hymn book first printed in 1564, contains only words. The tunes are transmitted by memory across the generations. Except for guests and the elderly or disabled, who are provided with chairs, everyone sits on backless benches, segregated by age and gender. Periodic Member Meetings are held after the worship services to consider administrative, disciplinary, or other issues that require the consent of the congregation. This all-day event embodies the ongoing flow of the community as it continues to interact throughout the week.

Beyond the local Gmay, clusters of like-minded congregations create an affiliation with distinctive practices. The terms "African American," "Hispanic," "Jewish," or "Muslim" each suggest a specific ethnicity but with broad parameters. For example, "Hispanic" refers to people from a variety of cultural heritages, from the neighboring country of Mexico to the far reaches of the South American continent. Likewise, the term "Amish," refers to different Amish affiliations.[8]

When I leave my home, I am within a twenty-minute drive from a group of Amish from a Swiss background and an hour's drive from an affiliation with roots in Alsace-Lorraine. The difference is more than geographic. The Swiss are "lower," or more fundamental Amish, marked by open and topless buggies, limited indoor plumbing, and far more restrictions on technology than their "higher," more progressive neighbors. Likewise, the Swiss are more cautious about interaction with the outside world than are their non-Swiss brethren. Both affiliations affirm the same core beliefs, but the practical application varies greatly. Furthermore, diverse practices relate not only to ethnic background but also to the size of community, geographical region, and migration history.[9]

Affiliations have names such as New Order, Old Order, Andy Weaver, Beachy, and Schwartzentruber, to name but a few. The forty tribes in the Amish world diverge in their degree of cultural separation, social isola-

tion, use of technology, cooperation with government, and traditionalism. Based on their level of "separation from the world," they create a continuum of Amish communities from the most traditional, or "low" groups to the more progressive "higher" groups that interact more freely with the outside world. Members of these diverse affiliations have different perceptions of and openness to the professionals and agencies that seek to serve them. Sensitivity to the sharp cultural differences within the Amish world is a key to providing meaningful care and service.

Render unto Caesar

The importance of civil government in Amish lives pales in comparison to the primacy of their church; hence, there is little need to understand municipal, state, and federal regulations that non-Amish (or "English," as they call us) appreciate. This does not mean that Amish lay leaders and clergy who interface with "the world" are naïve about these distinctions, but it does mean that Caesar's powers are diminished in their personal and corporate lives.

The phrase "Render unto Caesar," which underlies their sharp distinction between the dual authorities of state and church, comes from Jesus' words "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's,"[10] although he never specifies exactly what is Caesar's and what is God's. While the Amish respect the things of Caesar and pray for elected public officials, their loyalties clearly tilt to God. Their strong emphasis on separation of church and state reaches back to their formation in the sixteenth century when their ancestors made the heretical claim that the church should be free from state control. Still today, most Amish eschew receiving any government subsidies whether for social services, agricultural support, or government-sponsored conservation efforts.

The Amish hold sacred the separation of church and state in their two-kingdom theology.[11] Allegiance to the kingdom of God is quite literally their reason for existence. Although nations, states, and countries are principalities that exist at the will of the Almighty, in Amish eyes, these secular powers can claim only a secondary allegiance. At the same time, government, however corrupt or undeserving, is seen as a part of God's master work and is accorded respect as a legitimate power in this omniscient, albeit mysterious, divine plan. Conflict arises however, when

Caesar's demands run contrary to God's will. For example, the decision of several fathers to violate compulsory school attendance laws led to the *Wisconsin v. Yoder et al.* decision by the United States Supreme Court in 1972 that permitted formal Amish education to terminate at the eighth grade.[12]

In twenty-first-century America, the Amish pay their full bill of taxes—income, real estate, estate, sales, and taxes for both public and their private schools. In 1965 Congress did exempt Amish people from Social Security (neither paying into nor receiving benefits) for religious reasons. The Amish contend that their community has a Christian duty to provide the finances to care for members in need, and thus the large majority rejects both commercial and state insurance.

Amish people are permitted to vote (the rate varies by affiliation and community), but they are not allowed to hold public office or participate in political campaigns. Some members of more progressive Amish tribes participate in civic activities such as donating blood and joining volunteer fire companies.

The unique Amish view of the state helps to clarify what may appear at times to be irrational peculiarities and peccadilloes in their interactions with human service agencies. For example, the issue of state-required, slow-moving vehicle signs on buggies was contentious in some communities before owners acceded to fluorescent triangles and now in several communities to lights and blinkers.[13] Some more traditional Amish challenge building codes that require electrical wiring, smoke detectors, autopsies following accidents, or the need to collect horse droppings to reduce bacteria in rainwater runoff from the roads. Such discontent is played out idiosyncratically on a community-by-community basis.

Why, we may wonder, would they struggle with such obvious safety measures? Resistance typically involves two factors: implementing outside worldly policies, and the folly of trusting man instead of God for protection. The latter complaint has a sharp doctrinal edge. Many health and safety standards that we take for granted are simply seen as a lack of faith in God's care or as an effort to avoid the inevitable nature of his will in the world. All too often we fail to consider the faith-based logic that impels Amish resistance to such matters.

The Amish are enjoined not to use power, force, and litigation. Yet paradoxically they have empowered themselves by creating the National Steering Committee, a network of lay lobbyist and mediators who negoti-

ate with the government to resolve a host of issues and protect their interests.[14] The committee does not, however, use legal coercion to protect or advocate Amish positions. A common thread running through these experiences reflects the Amish view that the state, even though ordained by God, may abuse its power. Those who represent the state, either directly as employees or indirectly as recipients of its support, will be suspect until they prove themselves worthy. And even when trusted, their power and authority will be secondary in purpose and vision to the religious calling that guides Amish people.

It can be difficult for us as providers to cast ourselves in the role of "Caesar," for we prefer to see ourselves either as benevolent and compassionate professionals or as advocates for the victim. Yet in the Amish view, we have a role that *can* be both benevolent and an advocate but is not automatically framed as such. We must first prove ourselves worthy of that trust by showing that we respect their distance from Caesar's kingdom.

Navigating Social Change

Despite stereotypes to the contrary, the Amish are not nineteenth-century relics in a cultural museum. Their world is dynamic and ever-changing. The process of social change sometimes creates cultural creases that may appear silly or inconsistent to outsiders and yet carry their own reasonable logic inside the Amish world.

Efforts by members to maneuver around regulations in a community that discourages such action, both implicitly and explicitly, produces passive-aggressive and passive-resistive behavior more often than open opposition. In the opening vignette of this chapter, the woman who chose to leave did not simply stand up and announce her intention. Across the course of eighteen months she failed to attend communion, engaging in a slow, passive defiance. The outcome was no less clearly defined than if she had announced her resignation, but it fit neatly into the subtle resistance that is a hallmark of Amish life.

Similar passive-resistive behaviors can be seen as communities address the onslaught of computers and online services that are increasingly necessary for business operations. There are efforts to balance the expectations of the Ordnung with accommodations that are often essential for businesses to compete in the larger world. This may occur by leasing or renting computers rather than owning them, a parallel to the compromise

that allows members to hire motor vehicles with drivers but not own or drive them.

In one progressive community, a contractor found a growing need for advanced computer software in his work. His church, however, forbade him to have it on his property, even if leased or rented. This dilemma was resolved by selling the business to his son-in-law, whose Gmay did allow such leasing. Still at what point is a member accommodating to meet the rules or merely resisting the Ordnung to satisfy a personal need?

In another example, Amish teaching forbids the use of icons, taking the prohibition against "graven images" in the Ten Commandments very seriously. This long-standing conviction against posing for photographs has been tested with the increasing demand for photo identifications. Low Amish groups generally forbid their members to be photographed even for government-sanctioned identification. More liberal affiliations, on the other hand, may not object to identification photographs but resist still or video photography of members. Emerging technology is outpacing the Ordnung in this area. When I "friend" an Amish youth on Facebook (either newly baptized into the church or in Rumspringa), I find a plethora of family photographs online that would normally be considered forbidden by the church. Some liberal Amish families have kept photographs of members, particularly children, for years. With the emergence of online digital capability, photographs are being more widely disseminated rather than discreetly held.

Consider still another example of negotiating social change. In a traditional community, a young bishop's parents built a *Dawdyhaus*, a small retirement home on the farm of another adult child in a different church district. The Ordnung of the bishop's church prohibited pumping water under pressure into homes. The Gmay to which the parents moved permitted pumping water inside the home, so the elderly couple planned to install indoor plumbing in their new home. Conflict soon erupted between the bishop, his parents (former members of his church), and the sibling who owned the property where his parents planned to move.

These conflicts and decisions may seem arbitrary to us. Clergy arguing over plumbing? Or leasing software? And yet they are more than symbolic. They are reminders that all aspects of Amish life are covered by a religious canopy. To accept or to challenge church regulations signals obedience and disobedience, compliance and defiance, carrying possible eternal consequences. Technological innovations such as those above beckon like a

thief in the night, stealing the cultural separation that the Amish seek to so carefully negotiate with the outside world. Immersed as we are in modern secular culture, we find it difficult to comprehend the social and religious consequences they face. Only when we can place ourselves in a position to empathize with the dilemma that these issues create can we begin to fully appreciate Amish culture. Managing collective authority and individual response requires an ongoing balance of freedom and responsibility.

Signs and Symbols

Outsiders attune to the most obvious aspects of Amish life: plain garb and horse-drawn buggies. Obvious differences, such as types of buggies in different affiliations, are easy to recognize. With further focus, differences in head coverings for women, hats for men, and distinctions in clothing styles become noticeable as well. However, for the Amish, there are many more subtle distinctions. The choice of pastels in men's shirts, the colors and "pinning" in women's dresses, the style of shoes—even the width of the brim of a hat—provide clues about a person's tribe and compliance with the Ordnung.[15] These marks may seem unimportant in mainstream America, accustomed as we are to the whims of fashion. For the Amish, however, these outward symbols have long-standing tradition. Wearing hard hats at building sites was opposed because it threatened traditional garb as well as offering an unnecessary level of protection in a world in which all actions are ordained by God. The appearance of homes, barns, yards, farm equipment—all have certain expectations for the decor, style, and technology that keep them within the bounds of propriety for a "peculiar people." A young person's buggy may come equipped with a battery-powered, state-of-the-art sound system, but that does not obviate the remaining standards for roof (or lack thereof), doors, wheels, traces, and so forth. Likewise, death by accident at a construction site does not mitigate expectations for treatment of the body—including the respect accorded their religious beliefs by resisting an autopsy and conducting funeral rites in the prescribed manner.

On a day-to-day basis, symbols reinforce the cohesion of a collective society. In a culture that defines its separation by negating some worldly technology, *absence* is as powerful a symbol as *presence*. In other words, what is missing is symbolically significant, be it advanced education, smoke detectors, connection to the power grid, or fashionable clothing. In contrast,

symbols for us more often accentuate what is present: the Christian fish or its mocking transition by adding feet to suggest evolution, the burned American flag, the peace symbol, the swastika, the rainbow flag—each evokes a strong emotional response. In the absence of such symbols, we make fewer inferences about the person, dwelling, or vehicle we observe.

For the Amish, symbolic absence can have the same efficacy as presence. For example, in most communities a married man wears a beard, while unmarried men do not. The absence of a beard marks marital status. There are even more subtle symbols. An Amish woman walked out to a van, preparing to leave for a large family gathering. Suddenly she gave a cry of dismay and ran back into the house. She had forgotten her apron and would have been ashamed to appear without it. The cultural codes embedded in the symbolic messages, present or absent, of our clients offer important clues for understanding and interpreting their world.

Gelassenheit: The Amish Ideal

The set of principles that guide an ideal Amish life is encapsulated in the word *Gelassenheit.* No direct translation fully captures this German word. It entails submitting one's inner self to God's will, embodied on earth in the church. Disobedience is considered a sign of rebellion against God. An attitude of Gelassenheit also portrays a deep sense of patiently accepting whatever comes in life. Ideally, the Ordnung helps to constrain self-will, not restrict the individual. Those who embody Gelassenheit demonstrate humility rather than pride in their body language, speech, and actions.

The following nine examples show how various aspects of the church community are shaped by Gelassenheit. I have adapted and abbreviated them from the notes of an Amish leader who frequently spoke to Amish youth gatherings about the importance of Gelassenheit.[16]

1. *Sharing with Others.* Our time and material goods are not our own, but we are stewards over them. We must give account to God for them. This does two things. It keeps us from spending our profits for personal luxury and showing pride in our possessions. It also obligates us to share our goods with those in need.
2. *Non-Resistance and Swearing of Oaths.* Resistance to evil is plainly forbidden in the Scriptures. Gelassenheit shows our rejection of force and power. As we suffer wrongfully yet do not retaliate, we manifest

the power that comes through love. By refusing to take an oath, we are automatically freed from taking part in the military, police, or judicial systems. The government is intended to control the ungodly, who do not control their evil nature. Because the church lives in a state of surrender to God, we should not need outside government to control us.

3. *Plain Dress.* Some people think we wear plain dress just to look different, but there is much more. Most people in the outside world wear their clothes to enhance their reputation, to show off their bodies, or to demonstrate their wealth. This is an expression of self-will when people raise themselves above others. Our dress needs to show self-surrender. We dare not use dress to assert wealth, status or physical beauty in order to manipulate others for personal advantage.
4. *Plain Lifestyle.* Gelassenheit demands a plain and simple lifestyle. Our furnishings and way of living need to be plain and simple so as not to appear wealthier than others. Simplicity is related to stewardship. Our surplus is supposed to help others, not to enhance our ego. Thus simplicity keeps in balance the fruit of hard work. Gelassenheit controls the fruit of our success by emphasizing sharing.
5. *Language.* Our forefathers retained the German language when others changed to English, and they did this for several reasons. One reason was that it served as a mark of distinction, separating the church from the outside. But more importantly, they felt that a language represents the values of the speakers. English does not even have a word for Gelassenheit, and very few English-speaking people truly follow the way of Gelassenheit as we understand it. Our forefathers' distrust of English became stronger when they saw that other people who started speaking it also began adopting a modern Protestant way of thinking.
6. *The Selection of Church Leaders.* Gelassenheit creates checks and balances for the selection of ministers. The call to ministry comes from God through the church. Because we select ministers by drawing lots, no candidate can use his influence to manipulate things according to his thinking. Rather, the final decision is with God. The most popular or most gifted nominees are not always chosen. What is important is that a minister is yielded to God. Humility is the quality most appreciated in a leader.

7. *Gelassenheit in Communion.* The communion process starts two weeks earlier when the rules of the church are read and approved by the members. This is a time when we are asked if we are still keeping the vows we made at baptism. Only when we are in unity with the Ordnung and with one another can we observe this rite. Communion comes out of love and harmony in the church and not the other way around. At communion the love and obedience of Christ in bringing salvation is emphasized, and also our oneness together as one body and no more as individuals. Footwashing signifies the attitude of a servant and the love that dwells among the brotherhood.
8. *Discipline.* If one is disobedient to the Ordnung or falls into sin, then Gelassenheit is there to help restore him again. Since disobedience is a sign of self-will and lack of yieldedness to God, it has consequences not only for an offender but also for the brotherhood. The church cannot tolerate disobedience. An offender should not be confronted in anger or self-righteousness, but out of a deep attitude of love that should prevent him from being offended and help to make him able to admit his mistake. Discipline does three things: (1) it helps the sinner to repent; (2) it protects the church from sin; and (3) it protects the reputation of the church with the outside world.
9. *Gelassenheit in Our Church Services.* We read a yearly set of scriptures [lectionary] in church so that participants hear a balance of Scripture. This prevents ministers from being tempted to just preach on their preferred Scriptures and doctrines. Our seating arrangement and how we enter the meeting place according to age is also an expression of Gelassenheit. Each one has his place, so no one needs to assert himself. Our singing in unison is a form of oneness and a blending together. The noon meal is a source of fellowship and building of brotherhood.

All of these aspects of Gelassenheit are intended to help us to renounce self and self-will so we can function within the brotherhood in harmony through the principle of love. All these teachings grow out of the life, teaching, and death of Christ our perfect example of Gelassenheit.

This vision articulated by an Amish leader offers a bird's eye view into the Amish mind. These are the ideals toward which the community strives. Gelassenheit is the governing principle guiding the Amish com-

munity on its heavenward journey. The death of self, the enhancement of others, and separation from a world that neither understands nor cares is at the heart of Amish beliefs. We may not agree with these spiritual values, but respecting and understanding their meaning and power will significantly enhance our efforts to serve and assist this distinctive North American community.

CHAPTER 2

Changing Views of Human Services

Since early adolescence, this young adult female had been plagued with an ill-defined neuromuscular disease. Fruitless visits to medical specialists, multiple inconclusive tests, and the eventual frustration of the church that supported payments of her often-exorbitant medical bills resulted in a quiet community concurrence, in lay terms, with a medical determination: she exhibited a mild but genuine epilepsy, exacerbated by a conversion disorder. Conflict or stress triggered a psychological exacerbation of these symptoms.

Her family found themselves exhausted by the demands of her care and unpredictable dramatic displays. Their responses became more abusive in conjunction with increasing frustration. In one instance she fell, experiencing a seizure while working in the garden. Believing it was attention-seeking behavior, they left her to lie for hours under the harsh summer sun. Punished for perceived infractions by denying her meals, she was repeatedly beaten for then "stealing" food.

Eventually, she was banished from the house and given a room in a nearby shed housing a small shop. Family members brought food and monitored her ability to manage her hygiene and activities of daily life. It was at this point that I was called to assess her mental status and to attempt an intervention with her ongoing "defiance." When it became clear that she could not live independently, the family faced the choice of having Adult Protective Services informed or placement in a nursing facility. The latter choice won the grudging agreement of her family and bishop.

The young woman thrived in nursing care in a way she had not in her home, but she also began to attend in-house worship services held

by an African American Baptist minister. The family, alarmed by the evangelical theology she was absorbing, returned her to their home, developed a rotating plan for relatives to care for her, and dismissed all outside services.

Compare the chain of events above with a 1948 story of an Amish bishop sentenced to six months incarceration after chaining his adult daughter to her bed when he left home. He defended his actions by explaining that she overpowered family members remaining there and would chew through rope restraints. The woman was examined and found to be "insane" but healthy in the terminology of the time. She was committed to a state mental hospital where she remained for almost a quarter century.[1]

These stories are separated by more than sixty years. Still, if taken at face value, they seem to reflect a historically unchanged attitude toward those who are mentally ill. In reality, they demonstrate an underlying distrust of the services available to assist with mental or emotional disturbance, a theme that resonates in any Amish community. However, while these chronologically disparate stories speak of a hardcore conservative element that refuses to adapt, as with so many social issues the Amish manage intricate compromises with mental health and social service systems.

A very few remain faithful to old practices such as powwowing or the invocation of supernatural forces to address mental illness.[2] A much larger number subscribe to the continuum of alternative and complementary medicines, either as primary or as adjunct treatments for emotional and mental disorders. However, virtually all express a desire to retain control, either by maintaining an Amish ethos where these services are delivered or, at a minimum, utilizing service providers who understand and respect Amish criteria for care. The following story illustrates some of the complexity.

I had been meeting with an Amish client for some time and felt the need to meet with her bishop as well. She had demonstrated what appeared to be histrionic outbursts in church and at a wedding, although these had since subsided. Counseling focused on her and the family. Progress was good but slow, and because of my continued presence it was important to contact their ministry.

After securing consent from my client and her family, I drove to the bishop's home late one chilly fall afternoon, only to find several people in the yard. With as much discretion as possible, I explained my mission to the man himself. With an audience of adult and adolescent Amish males, he was surly in response. "I can give you five minutes," he barked. I acquiesced but asked where we could go, setting this minimal limit about discussing a client in the presence of others. "We'll sit in your car," he barked in a tone of aggravated authority again, and I moved to the driver's side as he entered from the passenger's door. Once inside with the motor running and windows up, he looked at me and said in a plaintive voice, "I'm so glad you're seeing her! She's crazy!"

I learned after the fact that the bishop had a son diagnosed with schizophrenia who frequently required brief psychiatric hospitalizations. A strong advocate of mental health services, he had been challenged by others in the community who found his views too progressive. An open invitation by an "English" counselor in front of his peers would not have been good for him politically, necessitating the gruff welcome I experienced until we were alone. (Reinforcing the maxim: Plain people, yes. Simple people, no.)

In this chapter I trace the complexity of thought and attitudes toward mental health and social services and the challenge this creates for providers. In particular, I underscore the growing array of services provided by the Amish for themselves. As such, these programs are the model on which those working from outside the culture can build. Not all services provided within the culture are universally accepted, and there is often an ebb and flow to the level of support achieved. However, these recent ventures represent the efforts of the people themselves and as such are a reference and entry point for mental health and social service that are deemed most acceptable.

Cultural Context

Mental health and social services for the Amish are necessarily predicated on recognition that theirs is a "high-context" culture—one that is dense with overlapping relationships in a closed community where personal knowledge of others is expansive and individuals often know each other

throughout their life-span. Unlike mainstream society their work, play, education, family, and church life are not rigidly compartmentalized into public and private spheres. Information is more frequently shared and considered public through this thick, interconnected web of relationships. In a high-context culture, an individual internalizes an enormous amount of data about others. Not only is the loss of a job, serious injury or illness, or death of a loved one known, but emotional and behavioral responses to the trauma are also widely disseminated. Consequently, communication appears abbreviated or "short-handed" to mainstream Americans, who are more familiar with a "low-context" approach. In a low-context culture, information is segregated into many social arenas and private lives are anonymous. Because of this, less information is globally disseminated and internalized. Rather, it is shared via verbal and written interaction at the point of personal contact.[3]

In sharp contrast, mental health, social service, law enforcement, the judiciary, nursing, and medical services are all examples of low-context professional cultures in which information is shared (at times, ad infinitum and ad nauseam) in interaction with the client, patient, victim, detainee, and so forth. For example, the amount of paperwork necessary for an intake in my work as a mental health professional is enormous. It must assure that a potential interaction is understood and/or the party gives consent. The Health Information and Portability Accountability Act for health services and the mandated constitutional rights of those in the criminal justice arena are but two examples of the plethora of data that must be processed any time a new individual enters these systems. Connections between helping professionals and the Amish thus begin with a mismatch in communication styles since we express ourselves in very different ways.

I have learned over time to "interpret" the meaning of interactions with the Amish, but it can be difficult, particularly with those of new acquaintance. For example, a bishop I have known for many years frequently shares concerns with me about the emotional needs of those in his care. Conversations often seem to start "in the middle" as he discusses an incident as if I have the background (I do not), am privy to facts about a family (I am not), and understand the history of a problem (it is new to me). Over time we have developed a synchronized communication style in which I respond to the emotional context of the information provided, a high-context approach. The low-context clinical approach with which I am familiar as a psychologist, which requires a thorough grounding in

case history and dynamics, is simply not compatible with the approach he knows and understands. Rather than insist that he accommodate to what is comfortable for me, I have learned to adapt and understand his style. (Ironically, I find I can do quite well minus the "necessary information" without which I would be lost in my non-Amish practice.)

The emphasis on tradition can further obfuscate our understanding of their use of services. I know of several Amish families in which a female figure (often the mother, aunt, or older daughter) routinely provides scalp massage for pain. Having observed these treatments firsthand, I know that there is an element of both relaxation and hypnotic techniques in the calming, repetitive motions and ritual preparation of the recipient. I have observed mood stabilizers, antidepressants, and antipsychotics aligned with herbal and vitamin supplements touting many of the same benefits, all taking equal pride of place in the compendium of remedies. In these ways the Amish do not differ in qualitative behavior from their English (non-Amish) counterparts. The explosion in alternative and complementary medicines nationwide testifies to their popularity across cultures. It is the breadth of illnesses and disorders that they treat in this manner and the status accorded to these alternative treatments and supplements that distinguishes their style of use.

Amish people are often wary of "counselors" (their generic term for psychologists, clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and mental health counselors). Virtually all Amish would agree that Christ is the ultimate counselor. Opinions on the need for counseling beyond the church extend across a broad continuum, but there are three primary factions in most communities: traditionalists, progressives, and the rest, who are middle-of-the-road.

As portrayed in the vignette that began this chapter, some Amish stand at the conservative extreme of the continuum. They believe in Christ as *the* counselor. (Thus, my involvement in the situation described was literally a matter of desperation.) Such people embrace an extremely skeptical view of the higher functions of the mind. Critical thinking of any kind is a gateway to evil. This is a mindset that not only emphasizes a limited formal education but is also deeply suspicious of activities within elementary school years that extend beyond the basic rubric of applied tasks (e.g., reading, written language, and mathematical skills, all at a basic level). Even to ponder the complexities of life is to challenge the will of God. Counselors of any ilk, including those drawn from within the Amish com-

munity, are viewed as encouraging a restless discontent with the life that God has ordained and should be avoided. For these individuals, counseling, as much as the more pragmatic intrusions of government (e.g., hard hats on construction sites, slow-moving vehicle symbols, social security taxes) are an affront to the belief that God is in control.

The more progress-minded people, at the opposite end of the continuum, welcome help from professional counselors. These Amish also adhere to the value of a limited formal education and believe that God is in control. Yet they are more tolerant of, even encouraging inquiry into, values, beliefs, and moral standards, though within limits imposed by the community. Even here there is a careful selection process. They prefer Christian counselors. Although these interventions may be tinged with the evangelical, a Christian counselor's beliefs are *perceived* as closer to Amish values than those who do not advertise themselves as such. Psychologists in particular are suspect, given the statistical probability that those in this profession are atheists.[4] For many of these more progressive Amish people, a particular counselor or small counseling group that demonstrates an understanding of their way of life will become trusted and accepted.

Falling between these extremes are middle-of-the-road Amish who value lay counselors coming from Amish or other Plain people affiliations. Such Amish counselors may have "on the job" training or, if they are members of another Plain group, formalized training through a Bible college or similar program. They utilize Scripture, Bible study, and Christian-based self-help books as cornerstones of treatment. Ironically, as these counselors increase their presence they also create a backlash of opposition in some areas. The decision to participate in professional counseling may be questioned, but because such counseling takes place outside the community with English (non-Amish) professionals, it is perceived as less relevant and threatening. An Amish or other Plain counselor, on the other hand, is more integral and may pose a greater threat to Amish church leaders, values, and practices. Therefore, some leaders perceive English counselors, who are more distant from the Amish way of life, as less of a threat.

The choice of an Amish, English, Plain group counselor, or no counselor at all is further complicated by the high-context nature of the Amish culture. Counselors who live farther from the community are perceived by some potential clients as safer confidantes, since information shared not

only remains confidential but clients are also unlikely to meet their counselors in social settings. Furthermore, some clients are aware of the rules of confidentiality in the world and rely on these to maintain their privacy in a way that cannot be guaranteed within the community.

Interventions with Amish persons with a Serious and Persistent Mental Illness can blur the distinction between these factions. For those in the community who exhibit schizophrenia or severe mood swings with psychosis consistent with a Bipolar Disorder, for example, the need for psychiatric hospitalization has become increasingly accepted among even conservative factions. However, they also draw a distinction between care for these illnesses (and the accompanying psychoactive medications required for their treatment), and the emotional needs of mental disorders that are not equally debilitating.

The fundamental attitude toward children and adults with developmental delays and mental retardation has changed little. As a people who believe that God controls all aspects of life on earth, they may find the presence of a disabled child or adult a challenge, but few who would overtly question God's will in providing this opportunity for service. In fact, Amish parents often call their family members with disabilities "God's Special Children." A group of parents print and distribute *Life's Special Sunbeams*, a monthly publication that underscores the providential placement of these "Sunbeams" into the lives of parents and communities. Some of the larger Amish affiliations maintain private schools that cater to the needs of disabled children, while parents who utilize public schools are apt to enroll their scholars in special education settings.[5] These efforts illustrate the willingness of parents to educate themselves on the cause and nature of their child's disability.

Addressing Mental Illness in the Community

The first highly organized and structured collaboration between the Amish and English professionals occurred at Oaklawn, a community mental health center located in the Elkhart–LaGrange Amish community after Levi (Lee) Hochstetler joined the facility as a counselor. Hochstetler's credentials uniquely suited him for this effort. His parents were Amish, and he had authored a series of articles for an Amish periodical educating lay people on mental health issues. Increasingly, Hochstetler and others

recognized that services for Amish clients at Oaklawn needed to respect their separation from the world and the unique parameters of their culture.[6]

In response, by 2002 Rest Haven, a self-contained residence for Amish clients in need of residential psychiatric care, opened on the Oaklawn grounds. Group and individual therapy and psychiatric medication reviews are provided by the mental health center staff, but administration, houseparents, and ancillary staff are drawn from the local Amish affiliations. Meals are served in traditional Amish style, and area churches rotate the responsibility for worship. The program was launched with an advisory board from the surrounding area and continues to maintain a predominantly Amish board of directors.

Rest Haven houses up to eight men and eight women. Over time, however, it became clear that there were individuals whose needs could not be met by the limited stay anticipated at this residence. In 2005 a long-term facility for men opened its doors across the road. It maintains ties with Oaklawn but continues the model of Amish-driven care. Because the emphasis is less on a return to the home community, the intensive need for intervention is diminished, as is the accompanying collaboration. In 2007 a similar facility opened catering exclusively to women. As with Rest Haven, the staffs of these facilities are Amish. By 2005 Philhaven, a behavioral healthcare center serving a catchment area encompassing part of the Pennsylvania Amish, opened Green Pasture, a facility modeled on Rest Haven. Like its Indiana counterpart, Green Pasture opened long-term facilities for men and women in 2012.

The introduction of these Amish-focused residential centers, partnering with community mental health programs, created both deliberate and unintended changes in mental health care for Amish communities. As intended, the model expanded to other communities and offers a culturally sensitive approach to care between community mental health and the Amish community. The diversity of beliefs among the Amish who are now using these facilities, from conservative to progressive, continues to expand. And the opportunity for mental health care in a safe and professional environment increases exponentially as a result.

One of the unanticipated consequences is the parallel spur to growth of the preexisting Amish residential treatment center model. These centers tend to be small, operated by conservative groups, and serve a niche clien-

tele. They rely heavily on group Bible study and scripture reading as well as a version of milieu therapy to facilitate healing and promote change. The majority of these centers emphasize physical labor, and at least some sell products created by their residents both as a means of encouraging a sense of productivity and as a small stream of capital. Harmony Haven Home, a Michigan facility for men, opened in 1997. It provides spiritual and emotional healing for many who struggle with what we would consider mental disorders.[7] Other facilities include Hofnungsheim in Ohio, established in 1999; Whispering Hope, established in 2002; and more recently Conestoga Retreat—the latter two in Pennsylvania, and relying on conservative, plain-dressing Mennonites as a part of their counseling staff.[8]

At a time when third-party insurance carriers dictate the length of treatment for almost all psychiatric hospitalizations and only the most severely disturbed patients become residents for extended periods, the Amish model in both community mental health center–affiliated programs and in private residential treatment centers assumes a much longer stay. Residents are often present for several weeks, as opposed to the few days that characterize psychiatric hospitalizations. (The long-term care facilities are designed for even longer stays.) This reflects the emphasis on milieu rather than cognitive interventions as a means of stabilizing and providing emotional healing, consistent with the central role of community in their lives.

Residential care has not been the only change in counseling emphasis. Increased media attention to child abuse in the 1980s led to frank discussions of the issue among the Christian right, including authors familiar to Amish readers. Formal outlets such as Pathway Publishers (an Amish publishing house) and informal sources (such as circle letters and small-circulation pamphlets) began to confront this issue. By the mid-1990s, a group of Amish who eventually styled themselves People Helpers were organizing to address emotional and mental health issues. The minutes of the organizational meeting of People Helpers' of Lancaster County held in May 1998 outlines the purpose of the group:

> [The leader] explained the purpose of the meeting; and talked about our goals. He told of the helpless feeling when asked to help someone with mental or marriage problems. He told of the need for people to have love and compassion for our fellow men. He told of the complaint that we do not understand mental disorders well enough to be able to help.

To meet these needs it is essential to educate ourselves, and support and encourage each other.

People with problems need someone to talk to; someone who cares. Marriage problems, anxiety, and panic disorders; various mental problems caused by being molested in childhood and those with sexual disorders are all among us. They will not go away by ignoring them.

To meet these needs we need teaching to guide them to the only true counselor, who is Jesus Christ. Some mental disorders will need medication to stabilize the condition before counseling will do much good. The German meaning of counselor is *Rathgeber* [literally, "counsel giver"]. A Rathgeber needs to know the facts before he can give good "Rath." That is the purpose of listening to know their inner thoughts. The difference between a preacher and a counselor is the preacher speaks and the counselor listens.

. . .

We can only help those who want help. We must accept our limitations. As one of the Bishops advised, when we fail we need to "fail graciously."[9]

People Helpers is now a broad-based movement with representatives in most progressive Amish communities. An offshoot called Family Helpers addresses family issues as well. These groups meet regularly and normally publish the minutes of their meetings. The gatherings include brief lectures on Christ-centered applications of counseling and a question-and-answer period at the end of the meeting.

This increasing recognition of mental health services should not be considered the measured tread of unremittent change. Rather, it reflects an uneasy and uncertain quest for the place of emotional healing and well-being in Amish culture. *Family Life*, a periodical written by and for Amish families, provoked a flood of responses with a March 2003 column titled "That Our Hurts May Be Healed," a perspective on counseling.[10] The article itself was balanced and relatively innocuous, but the letters in reply suggest a wide range of prevalent attitudes among different families, churches, and communities.

Two examples of responses published in the April 2003 issue show the breadth of disagreement, as well as the depth of thought the issue provokes:

The article on counseling was indeed timely and underscores the tremendous need in these "modern times" for direction on how to cope with "not so modern" problems. I am concerned, however, by some potential flaws.

It seems ironic to assume that because of so many strange and unscriptural quirks in modern psychology, we need to throw out the baby with the bath water. Psychology, simply put, is the study of how the human mind functions in relation to the conscious (and to a certain degree, subconscious) thinking and behavior . . .

The Bible gives some examples of applied psychology. The two most graphic ones that come to mind are those of the prophet Nathaniel breaking through King David's denial in the matter with Bathsheba [II Samuel 12:1–6], and that of King Solomon finding out which one was the real mother of the baby boy [I Kings 3:16–28]. I find these examples absolutely awesome, not only because they are in the Bible, but because they were so very effective.

. . . Very few individuals instinctively understand people. We learn through experience. I find it beneficial to also learn from those whose scope of experience is much broader than my own . . .

A more conservative approach anchors the opposite end of the continuum with this letter:

We have been aware for a number of years of the growing addiction Amish and Mennonites have for contemporary professional counseling, seemingly ignoring the exorbitant fees, when in most cases they could go to faithful ordained or lay members and receive help for free, providing they had as much faith and trust in them as in the professionals.

The problem may be similar to what Jesus encountered. "Is this not the carpenter's son?" (See Matthew 13:55–57.) In other words, our fellow church members are our peers. We know their weaknesses. They have no formal training and may not even have read books on the subject.

But wait! Have you taken into consideration the power of the Holy Spirit to lead a person to your assistance to say the needed words and prayers?

. . . The importance of prayer was sadly lacking in the article. In James 5:16, praying for one another is in the same verse as confessing our faults

to each other. We should never underestimate the power of prayer by a righteous person.

The attitudes of the Amish toward mental health and social service ebb and flow, and they vary both in place and time. A single influential bishop can dramatically alter attitudes in either direction in a wide geographic area. Likewise, a groundswell of change can suddenly gain momentum or quickly recede for no apparent reason. *Family Life* routinely offers "The Problem Corner," a monthly column featuring a reader's dilemma, answered the following month by various readers' suggestions. For example, a recent problem was a father struggling with his anger. Of twelve readers' published responses, several implied techniques to manage anger that would have been utilized in a counseling situation, but none referred the father to a counselor, Amish or otherwise. Each of the responses chosen for publication emphasized the ultimate need for reliance on God.[11]

Still another regular column titled "Learning about Your Health" invites readers to submit medical questions. A doctor responds to several questions per issue. The difference in attitudes toward the two professions is striking in that one utilizes a professional to write the column, while the other relies on the spiritual thoughts of its readers.

Those in health professions or law enforcement may not consider the attitudes of the Amish toward counseling germane. Yet the pervasive presence of psychotherapy in the legal system, social services, and health care means that the unique and particular Amish attitudes toward counseling are pertinent to all professionals providing services to these people. Court-ordered services for substance abuse involve counseling. Triage and investigation in an emergency medical situation often involves a mental health assessment. Social services inevitably include therapeutic interventions at some point in their work. We are so immersed in a culture of counseling that we often ignore its presence in our lives. For the Amish, these experiences are intrusions that must be recognized as such. Remaining aware of primary beliefs about the role of counselors and of any resistance toward participation is a necessary first step in gaining trust and cooperation.

The professional presented with an Amish individual or family for services must consider a number of factors. Voluntary versus involuntary presentation, place of service (community or home vs. office, medical setting, or other location), and reason for the interaction are likely to be fundamental considerations for any service provider. Community and family

support for such services and the individual's own attitudes are issues that take on greater urgency with a collective culture and may not be an immediately recognized factor. Furthermore, a high-context culture requires carefully determining the most effective means of obtaining information. Each of these points becomes crucial in addressing the needs of the Amish client. But as with clients from any cultural group, the first step is building rapport—the topic to which we turn in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

Building and Maintaining Rapport

Although I was a seasoned veteran of psychological testing, this was still my first encounter with an Amish client. An elderly Amish woman had been referred to me by Vocational Rehabilitation Services for an intellectual assessment to assist with placement in a sheltered workshop. Because an increasing number of its members had turned to factory work, her family could no longer provide rotating care in their homes, and she needed this qualifying service and its accompanying diagnosis to be approved for the program.

I have never been one to take professional dress seriously. That day found me in deck shoes, jeans, and a pullover shirt. My client entered the waiting room with her family—eight inscrutable people surrounding a wizened woman dressed in a manner archaic (as I later learned) even for them. My skills as well as hers would be severely tested.

"Hello," I said. "I'm Jim Cates." With that formality resolved, I planned to move my client to the office where we could speak in private. Naturally, a family member would accompany her—*a* family member, as in *one*. To my horror, all eight trooped along behind. A pro to the end, this did not visibly shake me. I fell into the comfortable routine of professional patter that explains my credentials and outlines the purpose of the assessment. I made eye contact with a likely candidate and used my standard opening line: "I'm a psychologist." Before I could roll on, my client's brother, a bishop of outstanding reputation in the community (a fact emerging later to my chagrin), said quietly, "You don't look much like a psychologist."

In his book *The Year of Living Biblically*, A. J. Jacobs states, "You haven't seen deadpan delivery until you've seen the Amish." How very

true. A professional "reader of people," I looked into the inscrutable eyes and immobile face of the bishop and desperately, desperately tried to determine just what he meant. I had no idea. With a sinking feeling, I knew that it was going to be a long assessment session indeed.[1]

Perhaps if I had heeded the voice in my head that said "Never again, never again," this book would be written by someone else. Still, we stayed the course. For the first and only time in my professional career I fumbled my way through intellectual testing with an audience of eight, an assessment poorly designed for an Amish matron. This was also the first of many lessons in establishing rapport.

Take the comment "You don't look much like a psychologist." Beyond stating the obvious, what did it mean? Only later did I learn the tremendous compliment that had been paid. Amish often view psychologists as humanists with a disdain for all things spiritual. As such, we are highly suspect, for placing oneself in our hands potentially involves being guided away from the *Ordnung*, or even from God's plan. To differentiate me from that particular crowd was a gesture of respect.

Overall, their perception of status, authority, and advanced degrees is shaded differently than ours. They understand state authority to be empowered by the will, or at least the tolerance, of God. Still, it remains authority outside the church, to be negotiated and compromised as necessary. They respect training and professional experience; however, they fail to accord automatic respect to such status or accomplishments. Their education normally ends by the eighth grade for a reason. A few may look with interest toward further knowledge, but at most this may involve discreetly pursuing a GED. Advanced education receives recognition but not status. That is, the degree or license and the services that can be provided are recognized as useful but are not automatically imbued with prestige.

At a time when convenience equals speed, mainstream Americans also accept the need for "snap" decisions. Not so the Amish. Many questions or plans require contemplation or consideration before making a final decision. In part, this derives from the drive for consensus, which is essential to the cohesion of the community. In part, it also derives from a heightened sense of the consequences of choices and an unwillingness to make a "mistake." It is common, for example, for an Amish commitment to a meeting or appointment to be, "That should work," "I think we can make it," or

"Let's plan for that." Falling just short of a firm agreement serves several purposes, but in part it avoids a hasty judgment. For those more accustomed to a rapid-fire, spur-of-the-moment decision-making process, this slow deliberation and cautious consideration can be frustrating.

Rapport, then, becomes more than an interpersonal interaction. It is an exquisite, ongoing awareness of the cultural processes that will differ between helping professionals and those with whom they interact in what can become Byzantine layers of expectations. Sorting through these intricate layers is the purpose of this chapter.

Expectations

A common theme runs through this book: the Amish do not see us as we see ourselves. That states the obvious, but it colors virtually every interaction, including professional interactions, and further complicates professional involvement. Degrees, titles, uniforms, meeting places (e.g., office versus home) all signify the status of the individual with whom a meeting takes place. The Amish are well aware of the power invested in professionals by the culture surrounding them. Despite this, they continue their relative disdain for that power. Behind them—almost a tangible presence—stands over five hundred years of tradition, setting them apart from the world and responding to an authority that they see as much higher and more powerful than any person, law, or policy the world can toss their way.[2]

As providers, such a "presence" creates an unsettling foundation for the interaction. For professionals, much like the guests at the Mad Hatter's tea party, a common experience has been transformed into a roiling parody of normal expectations. Depending on the provider's role and the extent to which the Amish are willing to "bend," the interaction becomes more or less curious. For example, a seriously ill patient in the emergency room is much less likely to create this aura of confusion. The attending family responds with the fear and dependency that are human nature in that situation and will be passive, allowing physicians and health care providers to respond as needed. In contrast, law enforcement or the judiciary may find themselves in a twilight world in which detainees seem detached from the true nature of proceedings. They appear incapable of grasping the gravity of their situation, decline the normal services and procedures of the judicial system (e.g., representation by an attorney), and lack an understanding of the process in which they are involved. Some may even seem unaware

of, or unwilling to accept, the potential severity of the consequences of their behavior.

It is left to us to accommodate. The Amish are outwardly comfortable. In their view, providers invade their world. If the intrusion occurs on the basis of reports of abuse or another need for intervention, those providing services are indeed strangers in a strange land. If they have reached out for help, that request is carefully delimited and circumscribed and in no way suggests a detachment from the culture and community in which they thrive. Regardless of the context, we are the guests.[3]

The Initial Interaction

Meeting an Amish client[4] for the first time, as with any professional-client interaction, inevitably involves an assessment or "sizing up" by both parties. Whatever the professional's training, we know the drill. In the health professions, the patient in pain presents with a need for relief that trumps an accurate history. In mental health and social service, the client debates how much and how honestly to share. In law enforcement, the suspect engages in subtle or blatant efforts to prove innocence. With the Amish, there are unique core facets to the culture that assist our understanding of that first meeting.

Unless the issue is a family matter or involves children, women are unlikely to be primary reporters. Even then, pertinent information may be deferred to the husband / father if he is present or may wait for him if he is not. Regardless of our perceptions of this behavior, it is culturally appropriate. Men head the household, and primary decision making, particularly related to the outside world, is left to them. (Women may have greater responsibility within the confines of Amish life, but they understand the limited range of their influence.) In situations in which the man cannot be the primary respondent, it remains important to include his views and responses. For example, in some families the wife is required to covertly assume the primary role due to a husband's illness or severe injury. Still, he retains his putative role.

Even among males, there is a hierarchy. In the example that began this chapter, in my naïveté I did not realize that I was speaking with a bishop who had the authority to pass judgment on the "look" of a psychologist, however whimsical that judgment may have been. I have observed interactions between father and son in which the son was a bishop and the

father a layperson. The authority in the interactions seesawed as the discussion moved between the family business, run by the father, and church matters, in which the bishop/son held sway. Males will rarely volunteer that they are clergy, unlike their English counterparts, who introduce themselves as "Father" Maxwell or "Reverend" Wright, or wear distinctive clerical garb. Yet among their own, clergy carry an authority that is not readily observed by the outsider. Asking with a quiet demeanor if a minister is present will often elicit the needed information. Once the provider understands the family roles of client, significant others, and clergy, there is a framework to understand the hierarchy of power that exists in the interactions that follow. This does not need to be a long or protracted interview. With practice, it can be completed in the introductions or (in the case of law enforcement or probation) in the initial questions.

The issue of language is rarely addressed, since the Amish appear to be so fluent in English. However, there are two factors to consider, particularly in the emotionally heightened situations in which providers work.

First, categorically, English is a second language in Amish communities.[5] German dialects (informally called "Dutch") are the norm for children in the home until they enter school, although they will hear English from older siblings and relatives as well. Affiliations, districts, and churches vary in the belief that English is encroaching as the language of choice, and there is an ebb and flow to this concern that changes the emphasis on the use of a Dutch dialect in the community, particularly in schools. Nevertheless, a dialect is used in the home and will be the primary language.

Second, virtually all Amish demonstrate their greatest proficiency with English as a language for purposes of business and day-to-day interactions with non-Amish. In more prolonged or intimate conversations, informants normally experience greater difficulty mastering a rich vocabulary to express themselves emotionally. They are adept at "filling the gaps" in responding to colloquialisms or sayings they do not recognize. Expressions such as "between a rock and a hard place," "I'm spitballing here," "let it be," and "close enough for government work" have left some of our informants *verhoodled* (baffled). There are also inevitable pockets of information about the world that are lacking, but are not readily apparent. For example, a young man asked me whether I liked a particular style of car. "Looks too much like a hearse," I said. "What's a hearse?" he asked, and I casually replied, "Oh, it's a vehicle we haul dead people in." Only by glancing at his

horrified expression did I realize I needed to explain non-Amish funeral rites lest he be left with a barbaric impression of our treatment of the dear departed!

The provider needs to acknowledge to the client and supporting family an awareness that a Dutch dialect is primary and that any information that is unclear or confusing can be restated or rephrased. The provider also needs to assure the respondent that there is time to collect thoughts and answer in a meaningful way rather than feeling the pressure to answer rapidly. This also reinforces the opportunity to respond with care and deliberation rather than requesting "snap" decisions. Parents can be reassured that there is time to translate for children, if needed, so that the youngsters are aware of what is occurring. This is particularly important since it sets the stage to include *Kinder* (children) in a situation that might otherwise exclude them by circumstance. Adults care deeply for their families, but in urgent or tense situations they may not share with their *Youngie* (young folks) the nature of events.

A final consideration involves how much time is available. Are immediate decisions required? Or is there time to process and consider at least some of the decision-making process? The Amish frame of reference in regard to time differs from mainstream American perceptions, so that clearly outlining decisions that must be made immediately and those that can be discussed and prolonged can be important, particularly in stressful situations. That explanation can moderate what appears to be stubborn resistance. Decisions that can be delayed or postponed allow the family to confer, to speak with clergy if desired, and to communicate with others at home who may wish to contribute their opinions too.

Establishing Boundaries

For providers who anticipate an ongoing relationship with the client, the role of clergy is an important consideration. Because the church encompasses the family, the boundaries between them blur. Unlike English churches, the Amish church is not confined to delimited roles. It functions as an arbiter of daily life, monitors activities among its members, and provides spiritual support, guidance, and discipline.[6] Accordingly, some clients will request that their clergy be apprised of a provider's role. In being apprised, the minister or bishop may simply be aware of the provider's presence or actually desire to take an active part in services. In contrast,

some clients prefer to maintain interactions with English providers outside the parameters of their Amish life. In these cases, involvement with the provider may be a closely guarded secret and confidentiality maintained. This serves the family well for their purposes, but in a collective society the provider needs to consider the impact of working "silently" with its members. An agreement to work furtively or behind the scenes can open doors in some areas of the community and close others.

There are no simple answers to this dilemma. Sometimes clients want much more information shared than is normally the case. I spoke to an entire church about a sexually offending member at the request of the offender and his wife, an initially nerve-wracking decision that I have since repeated because of its success. In each of these cases the clergy was integrally involved in both treatment and planning. At other times, no one, including extended family, has known that I was providing counseling. [7] The provider who involves the clergy is ultimately demonstrating respect for the community, but she or he must also respect the needs and desires of the individual client. For these reasons, in some delicate situations the old saying "It's easier to beg forgiveness than ask permission" is all too true. It is a delicate balance, learned with time, to decide when to ask permission to move forward, and when to move forward first and beg forgiveness later.

The request came from an Amish mother. Would I be willing to counsel her son, who was struggling as he rapidly advanced toward the age of 16? I was, since I felt this young man had become a "symptom bearer" for the family, and I knew that due to financial constraints, it would be easier to see him at home. I also suspected that their bishop would be unhappy to have me present in his church. When I broached this concern with the mother, her solution was simple: "Don't tell him."

Counseling involved roundabout trips to avoid passing the bishop's house (situated prominently near their home) as well as one notable visit when I was unceremoniously hustled into a back bedroom while the man himself made an unexpected call. (I was never clear how hiding me and leaving my car in the driveway served a purpose, but apparently it did.) As it became clear that the young man's struggle would not resolve itself quickly, I pressed the issue of visiting the bishop. My client agreed (oppositional adolescents are universal it seems, and the

possible irritation to an authority figure appealed to him), as did, more reluctantly and without the secondary motive, his parents.

In meeting the bishop I was straightforward regarding my role. I had begun seeing this young man, was concerned about his well-being, and wanted to share my concerns. I welcomed any insights or observations the bishop could provide, and I regretted not sharing my involvement earlier. I hoped he would forgive me for acting without his permission.

Surprisingly, there was obvious relief on his part that someone else was handling the situation. He readily accepted my apology, and since I was already involved, felt it was acceptable for me to continue. However, he also stated that he would never have approved such counseling in the first place.

The message was clear. If asked, he could honestly say that he had not approved the counseling. However, he had also chosen not to interfere with what was already underway. By begging forgiveness rather than asking permission, I saved the bishop from the difficult position of "approving" counseling that would be decried by many in his church and was able to provide a client with needed services.

Maintaining Rapport

Setting the parameters for further interaction is important. Moving into the interview phase itself, regardless of the purpose, is the most difficult aspect of rapport. At this stage, from a ten-minute history in the emergency room to a prolonged presentence investigation with the probation officer, the combination of brutal honesty and frank prevarication comes into play and is markedly different from the same behaviors with English clients.

Recalling that the Amish are less impressed by degrees or credentials, the client weighs trust much more heavily on personal factors. Providers commonly carry the cache of our professions into our interactions. Law enforcement anticipates the ability to intuitively understand and interrogate a suspect. Health care personnel understand an interview process by which they can extract maximum essential information in minimum time. Mental health providers assess mental and emotional functioning based on style of response to questions. In contrast, Amish people rely on the

genuineness and respect they feel from one individual to another. There is much less of a "head start" in the relationship on the basis of professional qualifications. Some clients will offer both factual and emotional detail about their lives without hesitation. More common is the careful dance of questions and answers in which they respond to any question posed with honesty but refrain from providing excess information. And it is here that they are masters at prevaricating in a way that differs from the norm and disrupts the established patterns of our information-gathering approaches.

Another important consideration in understanding the Amish approach to human service interviews is the difference in our interpretation of rules. We live with rules, but we also pride ourselves on their permeability. It takes only a cursory glance at current reality shows or fictional television to understand the popular angst with clearly defined limits and our willingness to openly defy them. In contrast, the Amish live with tightly defined expectations, the most important defined by the Ordnung of each church. What appears to a non-Amish observer as repeated defiance, bending, and maneuvering to avoid the rules of the Ordnung is, for the Amish participant, a careful and calculated dance rather than defiance. For example, I once rented a small "English" house from an Amish family (i.e., one having electricity from the grid), which included a washer and dryer. I was unaware that, as part of the rental agreement, the mother would not infrequently bring the family laundry to be cleaned and dried in the relative ease of the appliances there. My activities requiring the living space ended, and with the presence of the next tenant, so did her use of the washing facilities.

Had their bishop been asked, he would have refused the use of such appliances. Any bishop must stand by tradition, and they knew (as would any church member) that he would deny such a request. There was therefore no point in asking permission. However, the use of appliances in a rental home, with a tenant they knew well enough to impose on, was a situation not covered by the Ordnung. For the time that the opportunity was available, they used it. When the opportunity passed, they returned to a more traditional approach. For them, the situation fell outside the rules.

In a similar manner, Amish people are able to respond to providers honestly, yet answer only the question posed. For example, an eighteen-year-old was asked in a routine traffic stop, "Do you have anything illegal in the

car?" The answer was a clear "No." When the officer discovered several cases of beer in the trunk, the adolescent explained his answer by saying, "Beer isn't illegal. Drugs would have been." In recounting the story, he explained that had the officer more precisely asked, "Do you have anything illegal for you to possess in the car?" he would have been forced to respond affirmatively. On the opposite side of the coin, a Youngie on probation for possession of alcohol frustrated his probation officer by repeatedly acknowledging his alcohol use when questioned at his monthly meetings. In mounting frustration, the officer asked, "Do you want me to lock you up?" With equal frustration he shot back, "Do you want me to lie to you?"

Such behaviors may seem odd, quirky, or even irrational to us. Why would one adolescent be willing to lie about possessing beer, while another is unwilling to lie about drinking while on probation? Quite simply, in a rule-bound culture, "lying" takes on a different meaning, depending on the situation. When such behaviors stretch into adulthood, particularly in stressful situations, clients continue this self-monitoring behavior automatically. They sort and discard information on the basis of what is minimally necessary to provide to a stranger who may or may not be trusted, rather than on the basis of what a professional does or does not need to know. Furthermore, as can be seen above, application of "the rules" occurs from a much different perspective than providers normally anticipate.

The Amish also rely on tradition and literal interpretation of Scripture, although as with all fundamentalist sects that "literally" interpret the holy writ, this does not equate with concrete and literal application of the scriptural laws. Again, this is important to an understanding of their worldview and view of themselves. God's laws parallel the expectations a parent maintains for a child. To the child, the rule may be purposeless or even silly. However, the wise and much more discerning parent understands the reason for the rule. Therefore, obedient children of God keep rules that on the surface seem illogical or frivolous. This demonstrates a level of commitment and maintains the cohesion of the collective society. Providers need to be aware that there will be circumstances in which the application of rules appears picayune, but for the Amish they are inviolate.

Interviewing style is also important in these situations. Using open-ended and nonjudgmental questions generally yields more information than questions that allow a "yes or no" option. However, the judicious use of yes or no, combined with open-ended questions, allows clients to struc-

ture and organize responses in their second language. It requires attention to the rhythm of the interview as well as the information obtained to develop the optimal combination of these types of questions.

One exception to the potential for lying does occur. If an Amish mother is either fearful that her statements will result in her children being taken or that her husband will face difficulties due to her comments, she must now choose between lying to "the world" and protecting her family, or being brutally honest and risking the consequences to that same kin. As a member of a collective society, she will frequently lie for what she perceives as the sake of the family. This is not an easy decision or one that she is comfortable making. However, it is one in which she feels little choice.

The art of interviewing also involves a slower cadence than we normally impart to a conversation. In general, men are more likely to eventually become voluble interviewees, although they may choose their words carefully and take time in considering how to respond. Women may be more comfortable conversing with women, and as has been noted, children may need the assistance of parents or adults to translate.

One useful service may extend beyond the scope of many agencies and providers. Unquestionably, home-based settings are much preferred for establishing and maintaining rapport. "Home based" has meant meeting in every room but the bathroom (give me time and that may yet happen). I have used sheds and porches, basements and barns, attics and cars, and have conducted "sessions" at the kitchen table while family life flowed around us. Nevertheless, the willingness to meet with clients on their terms, the cost savings to them in transportation, and the comfort their home turf engenders all compensate for the inconvenience and costliness of the time and energy to meet there. Even if only a portion of services can be home based, such interactions immeasurably increase an understanding of the client's way of life. If clergy has been asked to be informed or involved as well, it is a gesture of respect to visit a bishop or the ministers at home rather than asking them to an office.

Follow-Up

Many times professionals are emissaries for their agencies. There is no place where this is a less-accurate perception than in working with the Amish. They do not refer to their experience with the Happy Smiles Dental Clinic. They refer to the care received from a specific dentist or hygien-

ist. Likewise, even in urgent or emergency medical care situations, they are more likely to recall specific personnel within the medical center or hospital than the name of the facility. Even when reference is made to a large organization, they will generally refer to an individual who embodies that group in their mind. For example, the Amish in several communities visit mental health centers for mental health needs. Even though they refer to the center by name, with more in-depth conversation they speak of a specific individual or individuals they consider their liaison.

Inevitably, large agencies experience turnover in employees. Unfortunately, such turnover limits the trust and involvement of Amish clients. If they cannot be served by a stable core staff person who understands their needs, then utilizing a liaison from their community can minimize the impact of changing professionals. Such a liaison, particularly for mental health, social service, health care, and law enforcement, serves as a "bridge": an individual or small committee that maintains contact with the agency in question on a regular basis and reports back to the community on changes, policies, and so forth. In this way the integrity of the relationship between the two entities (community and agency) is preserved.

Establishing rapport in the community becomes easier over time for two reasons. First, as with any skill, practice hones a provider's abilities. Initially, it is an odd experience to realize that years of effort to attain an advanced degree, license, or certification means little here. Yet the humbling experience of interacting with a clientele that values knowledge in the context of the provider as a person, and not simply because of educational achievements, is rewarding. But it does require stepping away from our own cultural expectations and turning back to view ourselves from their standpoint.

Second, they share their knowledge. As providers become known in their community, their names will be synonymous with their work. Trust is established prior to a meeting if the provider has the approval of former clients served. And as that trust develops and spreads, one finds oneself immersed in a culture that is both rich and diverse.

In the words of a phrase that the Amish use so often to express their beliefs about services, "We don't care how much you know until we know how much you care."

CHAPTER 4

Across the Life Span

Standing on the steps of an Amish farmhouse, I felt my impatience mount. The evening was bitterly cold, wind whipping across the midwestern plains, and the warmth of the gaslit kitchen beckoned despite the agonizing delicacy of the meeting that lay ahead.

A young family disagreed with their bishop. Although far from an uncommon occurrence, this particular disagreement had cascaded into a series of events that led to a rift. At present, the family was pointedly ignoring their home church. Rumors abounded. Harsh words had been exchanged, the bishop had slighted them, and they were leaving. In an act of desperation, a friend asked that I mediate the situation, and surprisingly the clergy agreed. This first effort was a meeting with the bishop, two ministers, and the deacon to hear their concerns.

As the meeting unfolded, I was struck by several aspects of this impasse. First, it was clear that the bishop's role expanded beyond my assumed norm for clergy. Not only was there a function of spiritual guide and mentor, but he and his wife had become surrogate parents for the couple and were deeply hurt when communication ended. Second, the age range represented around the table was fifty years from the oldest, a minister, to the youngest, the deacon. Approaches to the problem differed accordingly, with the deacon much more "psychologically minded," if such a term applies, in his understanding of the needs and emotions that festered beneath the surface. In contrast, the oldest minister perceived a matter of church discipline, to be handled in a firm but loving ecclesiastical manner. Their diversity reminded me that the Amish are changing not only in technology but in the influence of worldview and the role of individual, family, clergy, and community.

This meeting also highlighted aspects of the group that allow them to retain their "peculiar people" status. My role as mediator had strict limits. I could share thoughts and feelings, but as the evening progressed the boundaries of my efforts were as sharply drawn as the shadows at the edges of the gas lighting. I could leave the meeting and share with the family the changes that needed to be made to bring them into compliance with the expectations of the church. I could offer them the understanding of the clergy that they felt slighted. I also needed to remain aloof from all matters of church authority, including communion, Unfriddah, and the looming risk of the Bann. My efforts helped reinstate communication, but it was left to the church to address issues of expectation and discipline, a line I was not invited or expected to cross.

The fabric of a collective culture inextricably weaves the individual into the larger whole. This process is integral to an understanding of Amish beliefs and behavior. We may serve a role, reach into their lives, act with compassion, and even develop meaningful and loving relationships, but still there will be a carefully delineated barrier. We are not "them," and as such we view the turmoil of their interpersonal lives from a respectful distance. This chapter organizes that turmoil into stages within the life-span.

Childhood and emancipation in Amish communities is graduated, as it is in our culture. Many of the same transitional periods exist (e.g., developmental milestones and entry into school are virtually identical). However, while we delineate the major transitions into adulthood primarily based on legal expectations at ages sixteen (driving privileges), eighteen ("adult" status in many areas of life), and twenty-one (the ultimate arrival as an "adult"), the Amish post different markers. The first occurs with eighth grade graduation. For the next two years there is a hazy, liminal adulthood in which the adolescent learns a trade through an informal apprenticeship or simply helps the family. This is roughly comparable to the period between eighteen and twenty-one in our culture. No longer a "scholar," the child rapidly learns adult responsibilities but remains accountable to the discipline of the family. At age sixteen, they are free to engage in Rumspringa, "running around" with their peers. Until that time, their primary interaction is in the context of the family, both immediate and extended. Childhood is formally and fully complete, although maturation continues.

The Amish recognize the legal importance of the eighteenth and twenty-first birthdays, but by then many have joined the church or are already assimilated into occupations that will shape their work life for many years to come. The extended adolescence of high school and higher education is lacking. Ultimate maturation and adult responsibility usually comes with marriage and the decision to begin a family.

Childhood

Children begin expectations for appropriate behavior at an early age. I sometimes find myself incredulous to hear Amish parents complain about "misbehavior" among their youth. When it occurs, it often pales in comparison to their English peers, but it is no less a source of distress. The symbolism integral to Amish life begins to develop early. Children become adept observers of their environment, learning from their parents and older siblings to assign meaning to styles of clothing, choices in household utensils and furnishings, and general lifestyle decisions based on the model provided by their sect, community, and Ordnung.[1]

An important model for Amish children to observe is "inappropriate" behaviors and how they can be managed. Consider the use of cell phones, forbidden in some areas while tolerated in others. One reason for their acceptance is the ease with which they can be concealed. Their introduction into communities was facilitated by the ability to "smuggle" them into homes. Adolescents in Rumspringa and those working outside the home whose employment required them were logical points of entry for the devices. Once available, the temptation to use this novel and convenient form of communication was too powerful to overcome. As they became more prevalent, users became bolder, and the pattern was established despite resurgent prohibitions by the church. Children observe this and a multitude of other behaviors that are "hidden" from the larger community. In their play and interactions, they are taught by parents, older siblings, extended family, and neighbors which behaviors are acceptable and which behaviors must be discreetly engaged, a practice similar to mainstream culture. (I was regaled with the story of a twelve-year-old boy whose sixteen-year-old sister helped him drive her older brother's car across the back field "for practice." It was a manual transmission, and neither had ever driven before. Teacher, driver, and even car survived the ordeal, but it was a story long withheld from their parents—and their older brother.)

Unfortunately, there can be a darker side to this discretion. In Indiana, the game of "cows 'n' bulls" is a perennial favorite among boys in numerous areas. Amish men in their seventies and eighties acknowledge playing the game as children, and it is still practiced today. At its most innocuous, it involves pseudo-anal sex, and at its more serious, boys actually engage in this behavior. Whether this is child sexual experimentation in a cultural context or constitutes sexual abuse is often difficult to parse. However, there are cases of coercion or force, a troubling outcome.[2]

While play is an important part of children's lives, work is an essential aspect of their development as well. The emphasis on physical labor and the need for ongoing activity both contribute to the belief that a child should actively participate in chores and routine household tasks normally assigned according to gender. In this way too, children learn from an early age the importance of work as a virtue. Even the Amish private educational experience is designed to reinforce the importance of participation in the community with its values of cohesion and labor.[3]

Children in Amish schools may at first glance seem more distanced from the outside world than their counterparts who attend public schools, but this is only partially true. Those in public schools interact freely with English classmates, but their primary social connections continue to be Amish peers. The public school can create a greater facility in managing the outside world, but anecdotal evidence suggests that bonds with the community remain tightly in place, even away from its watchful eye.

In either case, scholars learn to distance themselves from "the world." They bond with their family and separate from strangers. Those who are most courageous—usually boys—will speak to an English visitor or wave to a passing motorist on the road. That does not obviate the barriers that stand, symbolic but formidable, between them and the unknown. Their trust lies within the affiliation in which they feel secure, and they are unlikely to share willingly or fully with others. Service providers interacting with children need to establish a solid rapport with parents prior to proceeding. Modeling such interactions and assuring that the parents feel comfortable is essential to a positive relationship with the child.

Adolescence

At age sixteen Amish adolescents are given their freedom. The extent of that freedom varies by affiliation, as does its duration. Among the most

conservative, youth may be free from the strictures of the church for a period of one to two years, and they only deviate slightly from expectations of traditional patterns of dress and behavior. There will be no motorized vehicles and no prolonged experimentation with elements of an English lifestyle. At the other end of the continuum—especially in large and more progressive communities—some adolescents experience a more angst-ridden Rumspringa, sometimes lasting into their early twenties. These rebellious youth more frequently engage in English dress and grooming, obtain driver's licenses and purchase vehicles, and generally sample a wider range of worldly pursuits. These are the extremes of risk-taking on the "devil's playground," or the world outside their community. The difference between such high-risk adolescents and those who adhere to the expectations of the Ordnung lies in a variety of choices in terms of depth and breadth of freedom decided to a large extent by family, church, and peers. Still, even in this temporary distance from the community, the collective identity holds sway.[4]

Because of the emphasis on a communal purpose, individual autonomy is an unrealistic and unpursued goal. The "freedom" accorded these teens involves a loosening of expectations and discipline. Many parents tolerate behaviors that would be unacceptable at any other age (e.g., relaxed standards of dress and grooming, tolerating alcohol use, or in some communities allowing ownership of and driving a motor vehicle) in order to keep their children in the home and within a sphere of Amish influence. The logic may escape us, but we lack the anxiety about the world that is endemic to their culture. Acting out may be problematic, but it is perceived as occurring within the community and beneath the broad umbrella of its influence (later chapters will discuss the reality of this perception). Evidence suggests that the practice works, for few Amish born youth fail to join the church. They remain involved with their peers throughout Rumspringa, maintaining alliances that can be fluid in nature but are essentially Amish.

It is for this reason that "gangs" are prevalent in the larger settlements. These are not gangs in the sense that we consider "street gangs," but they serve as social networks.[5] They vary in their level of tolerance for acting out behaviors, particularly in regard to alcohol and drug use. In the larger affiliations in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, these groups proliferate, although in Pennsylvania and Indiana media attention has caused them to be addressed in markedly different ways.

In Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the arrest of two youth on drug

charges in the late 1990s highlighted a problem that the media was quick to exploit.[6] Shortly afterward, Cinemax aired *The Devil's Playground*, a pseudo-documentary on alcohol and drug use among northern Indiana youth.[7] In Lancaster County, parents rapidly organized and began supervising youth groups to address the substance abuse problem.[8] In the Elkhart–LaGrange community in Indiana, the primary location for filming *The Devil's Playground*, clergy and bishops worked with local mental health professionals to create an alcohol and drug education program that catered exclusively to Amish youth.[9]

One difference between these two communities stands out. Lancaster has a history of greater distance from the world than the Elkhart–LaGrange area, despite the heavy influx of tourists in both. Lancaster relied more heavily on internal resources, drawing support from its own people. The Elkhart–LaGrange solution incorporated resources outside the community. This may also reflect the differences in the media presentation of the problems. In Lancaster, the issue was depicted as involvement with an unsavory aspect of the English community, a finding that may have driven the Amish into a more self-protective mode. In Elkhart–LaGrange, the issue was depicted as Amish whose own cultural norms were creating a self-destructive cycle among their youth, a finding that may have driven them to seek help from external sources. Still, both solutions recognized the collective nature of the culture and worked to keep that identity intact.

Adolescents experience strong pressure to remain Amish rather than leave for an English lifestyle. Pressure is slightly less intense than the expectation to remain once a decision is made to join church or, as some refer to baptism, being "blessed in." Yet the allure of family, friends, and a lifestyle that is known and comfortable can be overwhelming. Factors that contribute to the decision to remain include strong family and social ties, the limitations posed by an eighth grade education, the security offered within a collective society for those who remain, and the pervasive pressure of indoctrination from birth forward in the Amish way of life.

Involvement with social service providers on the part of adolescents is most likely to occur for those with "externalizing" behaviors. This differs somewhat from their English counterparts. Youth with internalizing behaviors (e.g., depression, anxiety, or somatic complaints) are more likely to remain within the confines of the community or their peer group and avoid seeking outside services for emotional pain. A small fraction of these youth may either seek help or be sent for help by their parents, but

only after their behaviors become a significant issue. For example, suicidal thoughts or gestures or crippling anxiety may result in a referral to a counselor or psychiatric hospitalization.

For youth with externalizing behaviors, acting out can involve drug and alcohol use, discussed more fully in later chapters. Acting out that is farther from the social norm (e.g., vandalism, fights, or other antisocial acts) often occurs while intoxicated. Law enforcement and emergency room personnel are usually the first to experience interactions with these youth, with probation officers and mental health / addictions providers the second. However, Child Protective Services caseworkers can also find themselves confronting these adolescents and young adults as both perpetrators and victims.

Amish youth not only embody the quirks familiar to anyone facing the challenge of steering a client through the rite of passage known as adolescence but also include their own peculiar idiosyncrasies. Having been released onto the world from a culture that raised them to see God as supreme authority, they can rapidly become intoxicated with the power of the experience. Enthralled with their choices, judgment fails them. When confronted by police, probation officers, or others, they fail to fully grasp that an authority still prevails in their lives. As a result, they disdain or disregard many of the statutory and court-regulated limitations that continue, particularly in regard to the use of alcohol.

The issue is in part one of deliberate adolescent defiance, and Rumspringa is in part a period of adolescent rebellion. Worldly authority is temporary, in essence meaningless, in the larger picture of their lives. Police, judges, probation officers, social service personnel—for those youth who step farthest away from the constraints of their culture, much of Rumspringa begins to resemble (for us) a prolonged twenty-first birthday celebration. We do well to remember our place in the larger scheme of their lives and to develop interventions accordingly.

At the same time, it becomes important to remind the Amish of the reality of our world. Some work in this regard can be done with parents and clergy, but during Rumspringa adolescents have largely broken free, if only temporarily, from these influences, forcing providers to turn the focus back on them. Adolescence phases out as they join the church and settle down for marriage.

Young Adults

There is an assumption, implicitly supported by the Amish themselves, that baptism into the church is a watershed that leaves all Rumspringa behaviors behind. This may be true for some young adults, but certainly not all. In fact, if pressed most Amish would admit that Rumspringa ends with marriage. Several influences are in play.

Joining the church is a life-changing decision. Again, we would be remiss to compare joining the Amish church to the experience of a similar commitment among other Protestant groups. The youth makes a commitment to a lifestyle based on a set of beliefs intended to mark permanent displacement from the larger world.[10] The period of questioning is coming to an end, and for most this also involves a choice about eternity, although it may not be expressed so directly. Much of Amish spirituality is deeply rooted in being lived, practiced as a day-to-day lifestyle. It is easy to forget that there are paramount theological underpinnings, and primary to these is the fleeting nature of our life on earth compared to a potential eternity with God. By accepting or rejecting the church, these adolescents and young adults contend with the core of their spiritual beliefs, their hoped-for salvation. (To declare an *assurance* of salvation would be too great an arrogance.)

Yet Amish youth are also human in their behavior and desires. Some join the church as the next logical step having made the decision to marry. Those who remain single continue the quest for a mate, and often that search means continued involvement with friends or groups with whom they were intimate prior to baptism. For some there is no immediate end to the perks of a single lifestyle. Alcohol use, all-night parties, and other Rumspringa behaviors continue, conducted beyond the observant eye of the church. Sunday night "sings" continue to be popular with young adults who are single even after baptism and remain one of the primary sources of social networking.

Although now responsible for confession of sin, these young adults may model their behavior on the premise that if their actions are hidden, they can avoid responsibility. As they continue their "partying" ways, they may do so with at least the tolerance of church and family, as these authorities turn a blind eye or at least partially obscure their vision. One mother sharply reproved me for allowing her son, a church member, to drink al-

cohol at a restaurant when we were together. My startled defense that he had recently turned twenty-one and made his own choice was (in her mind) a feeble excuse. As a parting shot she gave me a gimlet-eyed glare and said, "If he drank enough to throw up, he has to confess!" giving me a surprising insight into the unwritten Ordnung for their church.[11]

It would be an error, then, to automatically assume that church membership, particularly for younger, still-single Amish, means they have "settled down." It does mean that the transparent behavior of Rumspringa goes underground until marriage, and will be acknowledged much more circumspectly than was true prior to joining. Accordingly, interviews, questions, and expectations for honesty need to include this awareness.

This is a transitional period that fades with time (with the exception of those who struggle with drug or alcohol use, where the transition to abuse or addiction creates another problematic pattern). Particularly as the single adult finds a life partner and begins a family, the final phase of the adolescent search is complete, and the individual becomes fully ensconced in church and lifestyle.[12] It is during this period that the added stresses of providing for others, accepting the role of spouse, and coping with increased responsibilities begin to take their toll, as is true in virtually all young families. Financial demands can be a particular concern. Depending on the number of siblings and financial straits of the extended family, help from that source may be limited. Although a declining birthrate and anecdotal reports strongly suggest that younger families use contraception to delay initial conception and family size, there is ample evidence that the large family continues to be anticipated and welcomed.[13] A young mother faced with the responsibility of multiple children can feel overwhelmed as the traditional roles of parents are largely maintained. Fathers care for and are involved with their offspring, but mothers have primary responsibility for their health and well-being. Most remain homemakers to provide primary childcare, while fathers provide primary financial support.

Adults

These are the formative years for productivity and purpose. For women they are the years when growing families mature, and for men the years when financial and vocational decisions bear fruit and their potential selection as clergy occurs. The Amish emphasize humility, but there is an unspoken pride in work and family—the number of children and

grandchildren, for example, or the success of a business enterprise. What is lacking is an ostentatious presentation of material wealth. They carefully avoid these displays, considering them worldly. And yet the size of the house that serves as both home and beacon to the rapidly expanding family, the possible presence of a Dawdyhaus, a smaller dwelling built close to the family home for aging parents—each signifies a stability and sense of collective utility within the larger community. While there are no dramatic displays, there is a sturdiness to the structure of houses and outbuildings that symbolizes the desired sturdiness of the family within. Even furnishings are crafted to give a sense of strength. Although one may find a delicate piece or two, the majority are designed to withstand the wear and tear administered by many children. As one woman said of her sons still living at home, "When three six-footers go bounding through the house, you know it!" Yet the structure of which she spoke was designed to take such punishment and much more.

Adults also struggle with the standards of the community. They truly stand at the crossroad of change, frequently weighing the intransigent, tradition-steeped demands for conformity from the generation above with the impetuous desire for forward motion from the generation below. They are the ones most likely to approve, disapprove, and ultimately implement and monitor changes that will impact a community for years to come. They are also likely to be those from whom the clergy are chosen.

As non-Amish, when we consider the outcome of selection of clergy, perhaps the closest parallel we have is the behavior of nominees to the Supreme Court. Time and again, justices nominated because of their particular views gradually shift their judicial philosophy after being seated on the bench. The same can be said of Amish clergy. A layman holds power over his family but is expected to submit to the will of the church and the larger community. Once he is elevated to the status of clergy, particularly as a minister or bishop, his response to this power can change his outlook, demeanor, and manner of relating to others. Many clergy become wise and powerful leaders, skilled negotiators who are capable of both a compassionate ministerial response and firm limit-setting to maintain that which is Amish. At the same time, they tread a fine line as they mature in their roles, respecting more seasoned ministers and bishops, and keeping a finger on the political and spiritual pulse of the church for which they are responsible.

That responsibility weighs heavily. The role is assumed with humility,

and if some are pleased to be chosen by God as leaders, they are careful never to acknowledge it. Still, most ordained officials and their families actively grieve the choice, knowing full well the demands and heartaches the position entails.[14] Unlike clergy in the mainstream, who respond individually and voluntarily to God's call, these clergy respond to the mandate of the collective society, believing their involuntary nomination and selection is the will of God. Theirs is a duty thrust upon them rather than actively chosen.

In dealing with adults, then, it is important to remember the varied roles into which they will be placed. This is not only a patriarchal but also a hierarchical culture. Age is respected, but males will always garner more respect than females. The opinion of clergy will carry more weight than that of laypersons, but younger clergy defer to older, more experienced clergy. Furthermore, clergy in general are likely to insist on maintaining the status quo, whatever that may be, rather than risk offending their peers or calling attention to themselves by sanctioning dramatic changes in rules or expectations.

Older Adults

As noted, Amish culture is patriarchal and hierarchical. As a logical extension, it respects the wisdom of its elders. Senior bishops carry a powerful weight of authority, and age of either gender carries its privileges. My wife and I once hosted three Amish couples for dinner, including two bishops from different communities. The conversation was casual and humorous until adjourning to the dining room. At that moment, an immediate formality overcame the scene. With no verbal signal, the elderly bishop entered first, followed by the younger bishop. This was followed by the third man, then the three women in descending order of age in an unmistakable and deferential order.

Elderly parents may also live in the Dawdyhaus, built in close proximity to a son or daughter's home. This serves as a form of financially supported or semi-supervised living in which they remain independent but are within easy reach of help should it be needed. More infirm elderly parents may be rotated between the homes of family members to lighten the burden of care. Because their years of wisdom are respected, the opinions of older adults are generally considered. There are times and places

when such views may be discounted, as when an elderly parent exhibits dementia, but this rarely occurs in a public manner.

As Amish people age, they are rarely placed in residential care other than rehabilitative services. However, a lifelong practice of alternative and complementary medicine, as well as use of prescription medications on a "prn" ("as decided it is needed") basis does not stop simply because they are in unstable health at an advanced age. The benefits of at-home care likely outweigh the careful timing, dosing, and monitoring of medications that occur in a more sterile environment. Still, it is important to ask about such care in a nonjudgmental manner if one is working with the elderly, particularly if they are incapable of self-care.

Elderly Amish adults will also attempt to continue chores or work in or around the home for as long as possible. The type, duration, frequency, and quantity of work performed may decline, but the work ethic that permeates their lives continues. Both identity and a sense of purpose are inherent in the ability to contribute to the workload in the home for both genders.

CHAPTER 5

Women's Issues

My wife and I picked up the bishop and his wife. It was early one unseasonably warm Saturday morning in fall, and we were on the way to a charity breakfast, an event common among Midwest Amish. They were staying with their oldest son's family, and we toured their Dawdyhaus, under construction next door. Interior painting was to begin Monday, and the wife believed it needed to be thoroughly sprayed for flies in preparation. The bishop disagreed.

As we drove toward the event, the wife said, "Turn left here." It seemed out of our way, but I complied. Two blocks later she said, "You can park here." We were now in front of a hardware store, but our purpose remained a mystery until the bishop exited the car, entered the store, and returned—with two cans of fly spray. As we dropped them home later that morning, my last view was the bishop walking toward the new construction. Framed in bright sunlight, fly spray in hand, he was shaking his head in the negative.

Let me make it clear that this was not a bishop to be bullied by his spouse. She was a traditional wife who carefully followed the rules and expectations of the church, submitted to her husband's authority, and would never dream of usurping his role. At the same time, she maintained her own sphere of influence within the family. And as this story suggests, despite her husband's grumbling, there were times when her word was supreme. These moments paled in significance when compared with the larger and more essential authority of the patriarch, but such times and places did exist.

As with so many human experiences, humor and pathos nestle side by side. Many years ago, long before I consistently worked with the Amish, I met a former member—"former" because she had decided to leave her abusive husband. She spent long years of violence at his hands for imagined slights and trivial errors, learning a helpless resignation that her ministers explained as her lot, suffering as Christ had suffered. She would endure the beatings and then, waiting until he slept, creep noiselessly out to the porch and listen to the sound of traffic on a distant highway. "I thought of that as my escape," she said. "If only I could flag down a car, get in, and take off, I could be free." Her story carries an ominous warning: submission is a responsibility to be zealously guarded.

Background

Like other conservative Christian groups, the Amish rely on the words of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians as the theological basis for submission of women: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Ephesians 5:22–24). The ruling is deeply embedded in a culture that enforces hierarchy to maintain its equilibrium. The family models itself after Christ and the church, with the father in an ideal role of compassionate but firm leadership. For Paul the authority vested in the husband is absolute. In the verses following those quoted above, he exhorts the male patriarch to carefully model himself after the example of Christ, thus completing a family based in love. This has been described as a "soft patriarchy."[1]

A hierarchical, as opposed to an egalitarian, family model also fits neatly into the lifestyle of a culture that insulates Amish people from the world. Large families not only require more intensive parenting; they also require parenting across a longer duration of the life-span. With one parent taking the primary role of homemaker rather than attempting a primary vocation outside the home, this prolonged period can continue uninterrupted. A secondary benefit is intertwined with the ongoing emphasis on an agrarian rural lifestyle mandating physical labor. By maintaining a parental presence in the home, "farmettes," or small farms can continue, using children as a labor force and providing at least the illusion of life as it unfolded until the mid-twentieth century.

Skeptics may point to the darker side of maintaining a hierarchical tradition: it concentrates power in the hands of men. There is no question that this follows and that it remains a powerful motivation. Yet several pieces of evidence militate against this as the sole reason.

First, if women were subjugated as well as asked to be submissive on a pervasive basis, one would anticipate greater defections from the community by females than by males.[2] Such does not appear to be the case, however. Particularly during Rumspringa, the period of adolescent freedom when the majority of defections from Amish culture occur, there is no evidence from any community that females leave in a significantly higher proportion than males. Second, the hierarchical model among the Amish, while blatantly patriarchal, is even more complex. The patriarchy has a hierarchy of its own, as male lay members are submissive to the clergy, and within the clergy deacons are submissive to ministers, ministers to bishops, and bishops to those among their ranks who are considered "elder" bishops. The individual bishop also finds himself subject to councils of bishops called for specific purposes. Males find themselves far from exempted in their role on a gradient, thus arguing for a more pervasive use of social hierarchy than simply as a form of gender displacement.

Unlike some patriarchal religious groups, although they are unable to be ordained as leaders, Amish women attend church business meetings, have a vote in the decisions, and are able to nominate prospective men for leadership. Therefore, while submissive, they maintain both a presence and a role that assures they have a voice in the social and political structure of the community.

The Role of Women

Amish women maintain primary responsibility for the home. This includes the traditional domestic tasks of cooking, cleaning, sewing and mending, laundry, and childcare, the latter no small feat with five or more children. The traditional role of motherhood remains intact. It has not been diffused into "parenthood," a mutual sharing of responsibilities in a more integrated family approach. The father has a defined patriarchal role within the family. The increasing demand for employment outside the home often distances father and children, transferring parental authority to the mother in his absence during the workday.[3]

Meal and snack preparation is an essential maternal chore. Although

the basic responsibility changes little across time, cooking and baking are gradually yielding to the influence of prepackaged and prepared foods. Still, compared with their English counterparts, wives and mothers devote a much larger proportion of their time to preparing meals, often with the assistance of their daughters. The symbolism of meals and food is thus different than for mainstream Americans, who live in a world of restaurants, fast food, and ready-made convenience foods. For the mainstream, major holidays or special occasions may mark the rare times when a meal for an entire family may be homemade or semi-homemade.

Women also serve an essential role in ritual food preparation. Although this occurs in many cultures, the traditional expectations of the Old Order make it particularly true in two overlapping settings: church services and weddings. After church a light lunch is served with a traditional fare (although the exact meal varies in different areas), prepared by the wife of the host family with help from family and neighbors. Wedding suppers are served in the evening and also include a traditional menu. They are more elaborate than the post-church meals. Again, women serve as cooks, and there is significant status involved in these assignments.

With the influx of tourism, women are more involved in cottage industries, using their skills in the kitchen to profit from homemade foodstuffs. In some families and areas this has expanded still farther as family restaurants and eating establishments stretch conventional wisdom on the limitations for women in business. As with many innovations, individual communities may adopt a "wait and see" attitude toward such changes, monitoring their impact on the social fabric of the community and restricting their role if the broader influence is perceived as detrimental.[4]

Women frequently enhance the social network. Correspondents for *The Budget*, a national paper originating in Sugar Creek, Ohio, are frequently female. They report on weather, crops, and perhaps the most important information, on the health and well-being of members in various areas. Sharing information also occurs within churches and districts. Although the reader's mind may term it "gossip," in a collective society this dissemination of information takes on importance in assuring that individual members remain connected with the larger group.[5]

The percentage of men teaching in private schools has increased in proportion to the increase in salaries, but the vocation is still predominantly female. Often, no education on the part of the teacher is required beyond eighth grade. The responsibility of caring for scholars in the eight grades

that will be represented in a one- or two-room schoolhouse imbues the teacher with a power that is recognized but indirectly addressed. Teachers are supervised by a board, which is normally composed of parents and, on occasion, clergy. Female teachers are often young and leave the profession after a few years to marry or seek better paying employment.

In each of these roles, women exert influence but limited power. They are integral to the smooth operation of the collective society to which they belong, but they are also expected to remain submissive, operating within inherent boundaries. Their work is relatively autonomous within their sphere of influence, but that sphere is carefully controlled by the strictures of social expectation. Just as males are chastised for stepping outside circumscribed roles, so too are women. For the latter, however, that role includes their submission to males. And yet many operate outside the boundaries of that submission in subtle and creative ways.

A Phone Shack for Feminism?

The phrase "a phone shack for feminism" refers to the traditional preference for keeping a phone at a distance from the home.[6] By placing it in a building near the road, "convenience" and the world is kept at a respectable distance, yet allows the community to participate in its advantages. (With the infiltration of cellphones, the phone shack may become a memory in many areas within the next few years.) In the same way, the "submissive" wife is no misnomer, yet the influence that women in the community maintain is subtle, pervasive, unspoken, and powerful, adding to its ambiguity.

The interaction between religion, submission, and women's self-perception remains largely unexplored among the Amish but appears neither straightforward nor categorically positive or negative. Extrapolations from work with other fundamental sects that endorse the submission of women suggest that females in these groups do not necessarily equate submission with oppression.[7] For some, the positives of a strong community of faith either minimize the negative attributes of submission or mitigate the dysphoric attitudes and emotions it engenders. In particular, women may anticipate affiliation as an affirmative response to their submission.[8] In a collective society, this would be a further inducement to accept or even embrace a lower status in the hierarchy, since cohesion is a central aspect of the cultural beliefs. Also of concern is the diminution of women's input

to the family as men move into the world as wage earners. The relatively egalitarian status of couples as they toiled together on the farm, performing similar and intertwining tasks, is disrupted as men are employed in jobs away from the home setting that provide a substantial and steady financial remuneration.[9]

Conflict arises when women experience submission as subjection or oppression. Men are more likely to exploit submissive women, although the traits that would identify women at risk in a culture that values submission are unclear.[10] This is particularly true when one considers the biblical principles that conservative Christian men can distort to justify their abuse.[11] However, just as such behavior is not considered the norm in non-Amish conservative Christian homes, the use of blatant manipulation, coercion, and domestic violence to create oppression is likely to be present but still in the minority in Amish homes as well. The difficulty arises in the face of clergy who refuse to curtail such behavior, citing instead the need for patience in the face of abuse.

Yet the nagging question remains: how can professionals respond to the expectation for submission of women? There is a distinction—subtle, difficult to maintain, but important—between *respecting* the value of submission of women and *accepting* that value. I have met in a diverse range of settings with ministers, families, committees, and various groups, for meetings, meals, weddings, and funerals. In each case, if both women and men were present, women have taken a traditional, submissive role, one that I respected. In no way did I interfere with the behaviors or customs that placed them in that role in reference to the men there, nor did I interfere if custom dictated that they should be submissive to me (for example, an act as simple as clearing dishes that I would normally walk to the sink myself, or taking the requested or expected lead in a discussion in which a woman clearly had an opinion that was more essential than mine). This is *respect* for submission within the culture.

At the same time, I choose not to treat women as submissive in my personal interactions. I share thoughts and opinions with them as equals and encourage them to be assertive with me, just as I am assertive with them. We laugh and joke. I value their expertise and knowledge and coax their criticisms and critiques of my suggestions and plans. I attempt to neither diminish them nor treat them as less significant than me, but to interact with them as peers who share a perspective and life experience that is important, something that I value equally with all others. In that way I am

true to my own values, refusing to *accept* submission in my own interactions.

Females who interact with the Amish may have a slightly different experience. The majority of males appear to accept the authority of female law enforcement, caseworkers, physicians, and others. However, when female authority engages with women, there is a tendency to perceive their work as "liberating," encouraging a feminism on the part of the women in their care either by virtue of modeling or by direct exhortations to reject a submissive life. Ironically, not only Amish men, but some Amish women cast these aspersions, reflecting an underlying fear of the model and influence of non-submissive females.

Amish Women: The Siren's (Muted) Song

Because Amish women experience submission as a gradation in a larger culture that anticipates such behavior, they also experience areas of influence. In the vignette that began this chapter, submission by the bishop's wife did not extend to a disagreement over a domestic decision. Rather, that issue fell in her domain, and she intended to see that the task was completed by her husband. Nevertheless, he retained his place as the head of the household. Major decisions remained his responsibility, and she deferred to his judgment.

Women maintain responsibility for children. However, they also retain well-respected limits in their interactions with males. The following vignette illustrates the difficulty in communicating effectively from a submissive stance:

> My presence led me to the involuntary role of mediator in an exchange between a mother and her ex-gay brother (raised Amish, but leaving before baptism, a circuitous journey worthy of a vignette in itself). The mother's son wanted to visit with his uncle overnight. She understood little of gay culture and even less of the ex-gay movement and was concerned that her brother might make sexual advances to her son. Still, she could not bring herself to make such a direct and confrontational remark to a male, even one as close as this. Her brother knew the cause of her distress and asked her to confront him directly and honestly, even though the exchange would be painful.

"I can't," she repeated again and again. "You know that. We were taught never to talk to a man that way. I just can't."

The brother continued to encourage her to share. I voiced my support as well, hoping to break the impasse. Ashen-faced, she continued to assure us that she simply could not confront a man that directly. And then without warning, she blurted out, "I can tell you this: if you touch him, it will be the last thing you *ever* touch!"

Her brother said softly, "I can't tell you how much that hurts, but I am so glad to have you be honest with me."

She looked at both of us, shocked by her own words, and said, "I did it! I can't believe I said that to a man! I did it!" She was so thrilled by the ability to assert herself that it was some time before she could return to the pain she had caused her brother and resolve the issue at hand.

This mother's reaction startled me. I had known her for some time and had never recognized this reticence in her interactions. It was beyond her place to so actively confront her brother, even when his lifestyle had fallen (at least for a time) so far outside the boundaries of what she perceived as acceptable behavior. To do so required her to overcome the submission she had been taught was essential to the social order. Speaking to a male this bluntly was simply not allowed, even when it involved her perceptions of the welfare of her son.

The following story depicts another woman's struggle to find her voice in an Amish family. While her experience may not be typical, several themes do appear a common thread for many women.

As a child in an Amish home, I was one of several children. Like many women around her, my mother had six in as many years. Dad provided for the family, working hard and never complaining. Mom kept up the house and cared for all of us. She never complained, but I can remember thinking that she often looked tired and worn. Still, I felt accepted and safe. I had a place in the family and felt I should be grateful for all that I did have.

Time passed, and I too married and began my own family. My mother had shown me the model for a wife and mother, and I carried her vision with me. Our life was busy: children, my husband's determination to start a business, and building a house on our own. We lived in

the finished part of the house to start, and in the evening, after taking care of the children, I would help my husband with the paperwork from his job. It was tiring, and the lack of sleep began to drain me, but I wanted to do my part.

Eventually the demands of caring for the children, the business, and building the house became too much. I can remember pushing myself physically, believing that my mental exhaustion and depression was a moral weakness that I simply needed to overcome. It was shameful and humiliating.

I shared these feelings with my husband. He wanted to understand—that I knew. And yet, I soon had the impression that as much as he wanted to give me compassion for what I experienced, my desperation was so far removed from his thinking that he simply could not grasp what I was feeling. Rather than work with him to help him understand, I silently struggled.

Then, in a conversation with a group of women, one mentioned that depression is the experience of selfish thinking and concentrating on oneself. That comment only intensified my struggle. "Lord help me," I prayed. "I don't want to think only of myself. I want to do Your will." At that point there seemed to be no other choice, and I reached out for professional help.

There, I learned that I was beating myself for not meeting my own expectations. I learned that being "okay" does not mean being perfect; and that being "perfect" does not mean being okay. Slowly but surely I learned to roll with the punches and face circumstances, and still maintain the values and principles of the community.

My husband changed as well. One of my best memories of his caring first occurred when he did not know what to do. Instead of reading, talking, or trying to help, he simply sat with me in my struggles—silently caring and loving, *being* with me, just as I was.[12]

The struggle to determine the role of a "submissive" wife is an underlying theme in this narrative. At what point does a woman have the right to share her fears with her husband? In this case he was a caring spouse who attended to her concerns, but initially he dismissed her dysphoria. Likewise, one can see the spiritual/religious struggle with depression. Are such thoughts allowed a Christian, who should believe in the mercy

and love of Christ? To acknowledge depression openly was to risk censure. To be told by a group of women that depression was "selfish thinking" implied that her emotions occurred because of a lack of character, an unfortunate but common finding among some Amish, who prefer to avoid introspective processes. Instead, they use cognitive techniques to tout religious palliatives as a means of resolving virtually all interpersonal issues. Her decision to seek counseling from a professional source allowed a balance to her perspective and a means of coping effectively. However, it is noteworthy that she credited a supportive group within the community as essential to her well-being.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.
—Ephesians 5:22 (KJV)

Remember, Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did,
but backward and in high heels.
—Faith Whittlesey

The thing women have yet to learn is nobody gives you power. You have to take it.
—Roseanne Barr

With such divergence between the views of Amish women and many mainstream American women, how do social service providers approach this community in a manner that respects their beliefs?

We repeatedly cope with clients, consumers, patients, offenders, and others whose beliefs, values and lifestyles are at odds with our own. Perhaps they violate our sense of morality. Perhaps we simply think, "There is a better way to live." Regardless of our opinion, as professionals we distance ourselves from our emotions and carry out the work at hand.

The Amish require a different approach. They are passed masters in interpreting body language, voice inflection, and the fleeting look. If we truly believe that submission is wrong, we need to be honest, sharing our concerns. At the same time, we need to recognize that we have no right to impose our values beyond those that are necessary in the immediate situation that brings us into their community. Therefore, acknowledging that our view is not theirs and that, while we respect their worldview, we refuse to accept it for purposes of our interactions is an essential closure to any such statement. We then need to invite their comments or concerns

in return. In so doing, we open the potential for dialogue, avoid difficult or even dishonest communications, and stay true to our own beliefs while allowing them to stay true to theirs.

Louise Stoltzfus, who left the Amish to pursue a career, closes her book, *Amish Women: Lives and Stories*, with the following words:

I am glad once to have been Amish . . . Glad to have grown up in their warmth and embrace. Glad to have been marked and matured by their lives and their inspirations.

It is a simple life, with simple rhythms—the life of an Amish woman. A place where gardens and flowers, fields and clover, children and home determine routine.

It is a quiet life with quiet hopes—the life of an Amish woman. A place where reading and writing, quilting and sewing, cooking and cleaning consume most of time.

It is a worker's life, marked by the features of a working woman. A place where broad shoulders and large hands and sturdy backs are beautiful.

It is a religious life, marked by the features of a religious woman. A place where headcoverings and uniform styles and Bibles and hymn books are lovely.

It is a life I still sometimes long for. One I do not have—nor ever will have—but one which I treasure and from which I have learned much. In both its transcendence and benevolence and broken shards.[13]

CHAPTER 6

Sexuality

"Maybe I'll just be gay." And with that half-flippant, half-serious challenge, a late adolescent managed to strike fear in my heart as the train wreck of the practice I had built with the Amish flashed before my eyes.

I had known him for some time and suspected his struggle with sexuality long before he entered Rumspringa. However, he had not shared it directly, and I had not pressed the issue until the evidence became an "elephant in the room," a presence too large to avoid. Even then, sharing his feelings—not an identity, merely the feelings of same-sex attraction—was a terrifying process of exploration, acknowledging behaviors and initially denying desires, but slowly becoming comfortable with one person in his life who knew the terrible secret he carried. So I had taken a neutral counselor's position, affirming my support for any of the directions he might take: (a) since such thoughts and feelings are sinful, they need to be suppressed, allowing him to remain within the community; (b) since such thoughts and feelings are sinful, they need to be suppressed, but he will need an ex-gay support group, which can be obtained only by leaving the Amish for another fundamentalist Christian group; or (c) such thoughts and feelings are acceptable and need to be expressed, allowing the formation of a gay identity by leaving the community entirely. I was also clear that none of these journeys will be easy.

Content in my nonjudgmental empathy, I did not factor into consideration how powerful this stance could be for a youth struggling not just with sexuality but with the more global decision about his role in life. "Nonjudgmental" came to appear a much more enticing approach than the stern code and numbing expectation of silence on the part of

his sect, particularly for a youth with raging hormones who was attempting to suppress his sexual desires. It was thus that I found myself facing the penultimate question, asked in such an oblique and inconsequential, but oh so Amish way, of my reaction if he left the group and took on the persona of a gay male. It was also at that moment that my selfish fears came to the fore. Becoming the "Pied Piper" of worldly pursuits for adolescents would do little to cement my reputation![1]

Several years later, he survived his counseling with me and remains committed to his conservative values. He joined the Amish church, married, and has several children. He continues to have an intermittent struggle with same-sex feelings. A primary frustration is the reticence of the community to address any sexual issue, much less the demon of same-sex desires. He continues to reach out to English programs to find ways to cope, as well as sharing his struggles with me.

As this vignette suggests, despite their best intentions to live apart from the world, the Amish cannot live apart from their sexual desires. Sexual acting out can bring significant distress (as well as sexual urges that we might not define as "acting out" but that defy their cultural norms). I have worked with Amish survivors of child sexual abuse and incest, sex offenders, and those with same-sex desires. I have counseled young men and young women who have engaged in premarital, and at times casual, sex; assisted couples with the consequences of affairs; counseled males with a compulsion to view pornography; and confronted the difficulty of unwanted pregnancy, both for an Amish couple, and one English and one Amish parent. I have testified for those convicted of sexual offenses. Although the list is long, this is still a fraction of the Amish people I see as clients. Nevertheless, they require an inordinate percentage of my time.

This chapter explores both the "written" and "unwritten" expectations for sex and sexuality among the Amish. This is a delicate task, for the "unwritten" expectations are based on my knowledge of a limited sample and vary across the life-span and across Amish affiliations in both the nature and application of these rules. Still, there seem to be few printed sources that discuss Amish sexuality, and this is consistent with the observation that this is an area Amish are very reluctant to discuss.

Sexual Drive as God's Plan

Sexual relations, as the Amish believe they were intended, involve a naïveté or primal innocence that was lost in humankind's fall. Woman yielded to the tempting allure of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, and man followed close behind. With that loss of innocence comes distance from a true and pure relationship with God in all spheres, and with that distance comes as well the need for a code of conduct to proscribe and regulate appropriate behaviors. This is particularly true in the sexual realm.

Again, the common themes of a lack of critical thinking, rejection of the scientific method, and a healthy skepticism about mental health practices come into play. If sexual behavior is for the purpose of procreation, then heterosexual vaginal intercourse is the only necessary and acceptable sexual activity, and only a married couple should engage in such behavior.

As I write the paragraph above, the slogan that runs through my mind is "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas." The Amish reticence to discuss sex is pervasive. Sexual behavior, sex education, even sexual mores are taboo. Of course, exceptions exist. Young men in any culture share their sexual fantasies and exploits. Young women share with each other as well. Still, as a general rule sex is on the "forbidden" list for open discussion. Unfortunately, forbidden sexual behaviors then take place without the overt awareness of the community and occur with shameful impunity. If a sexual sin *is* uncovered, the miscreants are expected to confess, and if the sin warrants, are placed under the Bann. However, in the tradition of forgiveness, once penance is complete, the sin is forgotten. The logical awareness that sexual behavior occurs in patterns and that the behavior will be repeated falls into conflict with the biblical injunction to address the sin and move forward in the light of a new day. And here the professional community makes one of its greatest missteps.

For us, the codification of "deviant" sexual behavior takes on a distinctive continuum of menace, based on the risk to others. Regardless of our moral stance, we understand the range from victimization to victimless crimes. Rape and child sexual abuse are vicious offenses. Sex workers (prostitutes) can offend our moral sensibilities and reflect the abuse and domination of women but are often considered a step removed from rape and sexual abuse. Issues such as cohabitation, divorce, and contraception create a struggle, often within families or even within the individual, to

determine the moral "right." And we are rarely confronted with acts of zoophilia. Yet for at least a segment of the Amish population, each of these is a sin that defies the natural order dictated by God. As such, they distance the individual from a relationship with the Divine. He is the essential authority to which they respond. The state, representing "man's law," cannot intervene and demand loyalty in the same way as does their Creator. For that reason, they do not parse sexual sins as we do, relegating some to the "disgusting" pile, but nevertheless overlooking their potential legal and emotional consequences. For example, we know that there is tolerance if not acceptance, even among conservative Christian communities, for masturbation. Attitudes toward homosexuality are in flux, but move more and more toward acceptance. And nationwide there is significant tolerance for divorce and cohabitation. The only area of consistency is strong support against sexual acts that violate the rights of others. In contrast, many Amish perceive all of these matters with intolerance, with far fewer degrees of separation. An area of clear abhorrence, falling in a category separate from all others, is the act of abortion. As pacifists, the Amish reject homicide of any type, and termination of the fetus at any stage is considered murder. No other sexual sin meets with such compounded shame and guilt. Yet for the same reasons, the shame surrounding all sexual sins keeps them a deeply held secret, both for the individual who sins and for the church that hears confession when the sin is brought to light.

Deviation from God's Plan: Cultural Taboos and Paraphilias

In 1969 what became known as the Stonewall Rebellion occurred in Greenwich Village, New York. It has since been identified as the rallying point for the Gay Liberation movement. Since that time, lesbians have become a vocal minority, swept into prominence along with the feminist movement of the 1970s. HIV disease eventually became a global epidemic, but not before forcing a painful introspection onto the gay male community about the consequences of casual, celebratory sex. Bisexual and transgendered minorities emerged as distinct entities and were included as a part of this liberation movement. The gay community as a whole discovered a political voice under the umbrella of "queer communities," and state after state is legalizing gay marriage. In the intervening years, the anti-gay movement has become better organized and more political in its opposition but has softened its attitude. The counterpoint of "ex-gays"

has become a more visible and vocal minority, arguing for the viability of conversion of homosexual desires but avoiding the stridency of earlier efforts. The Christian right has even begun to dialogue with gays.[2] By the first part of the twenty-first century, regardless of one's political and moral opinion, same-sex interests are a social force in mainstream America.[3]

Not so among the Amish. For those with same-sex interests there is no organized subculture. If one defines the term "gay" as an individual who accepts homosexuality as an identity, then by default there can be no "gay" Amish. To accept one's desires would be to deny the sect. In the same way there are few "ex-gay" Amish, for to identify oneself as "ex-gay" means to acknowledge a previous identity in which one accepted these desires. As the fledgling gay movement passed them by, so have the solidified gains of that movement across the past years. Likewise, since their culture has been largely untouched by the encroachments of gay culture, they have expressed disdain toward the efforts to combat these encroachments.[4] (Ironically, former Amish who identify both as "Amish" and "gay" are beginning to appear online, although the long-term outcome of this effort to create a subculture remains to be seen.)

This is not to say that same-sex sexual and even romantic relationships do not occur within the Amish sect. It is to say that these relationships are clandestine and devoid of the effort to achieve a subcultural respectability that exists for English same-sex couples. It also seems that, consistent with clandestine same-sex behavior in the larger culture, men accept the probability of casual or short-term liaisons, while women are more likely to engage in emotional or long-term liaisons.

Despite the lack of recognition within the community, those with same-sex desires are beginning to seek treatment, as the vignette beginning this chapter suggests. Those who embrace a counseling model are most likely to pursue this approach and to rely on Christian-based conversion therapy (i.e., treatment designed to "retrain" thinking and emotions to emphasize heterosexual interests and deemphasize homosexual desires).[5]

Zoophilia, or sex with animals, appears to be sufficiently common that confessions about its occurrence do not shock church members. The majority of offenders appear to be younger males, although older adult males may at times engage in this behavior as well. Amish lore often identifies specific geographical areas in a community as more prone to this paraphilia, a form of stereotyping based on anecdotal evidence that seems to have little basis in fact.

Other paraphilias exist, but remain well-hidden. An Amish man was found hanged in a shed. The coroner ruled his death a suicide. However, he had hung himself in a sitting position only a few inches above the floor, cross-dressed in women's clothing. The details of the death strongly suggested autoerotic asphyxiation gone terribly awry, but the coroner believed that the sensibilities of the community would be less distressed by death as suicide. The transvestism and the probable autoerotic sex play were thus handled quietly in both the Amish and larger communities. In another case, a couple requested assistance because the husband had become addicted to pornography. He would drive his wife by buggy to a local motel, and they would engage in sex while he used pay-per-view movies as a stimulus.

While it is safe to assume that a full range of paraphilias exist, it is also safe to assume that they create a much stronger sense of guilt than we might anticipate, given the tightly restricted expectations for sexual behavior within Amish communities. Again, regardless of the social stigma that is or is not attached to these behaviors in "the world," within the Amish community all such behaviors are subject to approximately equal censure. An Amish brochure, *Walk in the Light*, suggests: "In our churches it is necessary for the bishop and his close associates to know the details of any misconduct in order to determine the degree of correction needed. It is not necessary for the laity to know all the details. An old German adage says '*Was dir nicht angehet, dem frage nicht nach*' (Whatever is not your business, do not make inquiry into)."

Premarital Sex

The issue of premarital sex is often confronted in Rumspringa, frequently as a corollary to parties with heavy drinking and subsequent impaired judgment. However, it can occur later as well. A recently engaged young man was found to have condoms in his pocket. When questioned by his bishop, he acknowledged that he and his fiancée were sexually active with contraception. As a consequence, they were placed under a six-week Bann and their wedding moved from mid-week to a Sunday, lacking the celebration and sense of occasion that would otherwise have been present.

Regrettably, Amish adolescent females describe many of the same pressures to perform sexually as their English counterparts. For example, in

the "partying" Rumspringa groups, many assume casual sexual activity with male partners to be a sine qua non for popularity, and coercion or even force may be considered a normal practice. In groups that place less emphasis on drinking, this appears less problematic, but sexual activity is still a relatively common phenomenon. Few parents would condone such behavior, but they often feel trapped by the desire to keep their children home and to monitor *simmie* ("foolish") behavior rather than risk pushing children into living in "the world." Thus, they disapprove of sexual acting out yet recognize that it is a corollary to alcohol use at parties. In the balance, they prefer to allow such behaviors if it means that their children will remain under their influence.

Talking about (Shhhh . . . .) Sex

Unlike the mainstream culture, within the Amish community there is reluctance to even broach the topics of sex and sexuality. Not only contraception but more general sexual behaviors are rarely discussed with children. (One young man who had sexually abused a sibling admitted that his mother suggested to him that he masturbate instead, although both were sins. This occurred after the abuse came to light and was the first and only sexual discussion he ever had with either parent.) There is one indirect reference to an intersex condition (hermaphroditism) in an Amish couple in the literature, an awareness that was apparently hidden from or simply ignored by the community until after the couple's death.[6] Even widely circulated brochures that discuss the issue of sexual abuse couch their language carefully. Both *Walk in the Light* and *A Fence or an Ambulance?* speak of sexual sin and the need for sex to occur within the marriage relationship.[7] They also address issues such as sex with animals and child sexual abuse. However, both use the term "private parts," and describe in only the vaguest terms the types of behaviors that are taboo. It is left to the reader to understand that this wide variety of sexual and sexualized acts, from flirtations, to overtly inappropriate behaviors, to violating the rights of others may vary in their level of severity. These brochures also highlight the lack of specificity with which these issues are addressed within the community and filter down to discussions with children.

For example, *Walk in the Light* includes a section that reads in part as follows:

What actually are sexual sins? If done to a minor, these are also child abuse.

A) It is indecent exposure.
B) It is touching others' private parts, or having them touch ours, whether on bare skin or on top of clothes.
C) It is uncovering yourself or others, or asking them to uncover themselves for your pleasure.
D) It is suggestive sexual conversation—conversation that either gratifies self or arouses others.
E) It is bestiality, which is the use of animals for sexual gratification.

All sexual acts outside of marriage are sin.

This unqualified listing of sexual sins reinforces the equality of deviant behavior rather than the scaling of sexual misconduct that we employ.

Contraception

Still the Amish do learn about sex and appear knowledgeable about contraception. Rumspringa-age males who engage in intercourse often admit using condoms, and at least some Amish females are beginning to insist that their partners use condoms prior to intercourse. Such changes in attitudes about premarital sex may influence early marital sexual practices as well.

Another salient issue that is edging its way into the community is the "morning after" pill. Although abortion may be considered or passively attempted through herbs or powwowing (again, a rare occurrence), it is flatly rejected by church leaders who label it sin. Use of the "morning after" pill is equally unacceptable, but as with the mainstream culture, younger Amish women, who are most likely to consider its use, may experience less hesitancy using it than aborting what they perceive to be an actual fetus. Anecdotal information suggests that much depends on the level of sexual awareness and knowledge of the young woman considering this option and that its use continues to be extremely rare.

Single parents are more likely to be Amish mothers who have been impregnated by English fathers who then renounce putative rights to their child, although there are cases of Amish fathers who act in the same manner.[8] Extramarital relationships do occur, although they are rarely

discussed. These are subject to church discipline and generally result in the six-week Bann. Although based on anecdotal evidence, it seems that extramarital relationships in which both parties are Amish, or in which the female is Amish and the male is English are treated more harshly than relationships in which the male is Amish and the female is English.

Masturbation

Overt attitudes toward masturbation vary based on age, church, and community. Like other sexual behaviors, it is rarely discussed by Amish people. I have worked with several adolescent males who sexually offended. In each case a question about frequency of masturbation and fantasies (including tossing out every slang phrase I have ever heard) simply brought a puzzled look. When I broke down and described the act, a light would dawn in those quizzical eyes and, like Archimedes in the bath, they would give an appropriate version of "Eureka!" such as "Oh sure! I do that!" Although there are terms in the Dutch dialects for the act (e.g., *selbst beflectung*), none had ever heard it referenced.

One young man was particularly offended when I suggested that he needed to find fantasies other than his cousin. In his mind I was encouraging him to masturbate, a sin of equal proportion to sexual abuse. His solution was to continue to attempt avoiding self-stimulating at all, an effort that did not bode well, based on recent history. This impasse lasted until, in desperation, we hammered out a compromise. If his bishop approved, he was willing to try alternate fantasies during those times when the flesh was weak. Needless to say, this was not a conversation I relished, but with a wisdom for which I was truly thankful, the bishop said, "As long as he's trying to stop and he's sorry afterward, I don't see a problem." That approval moved us forward and cemented the therapeutic alliance.

The following story was written for an Amish booklet on sexual healing by a young Amish adult. It gives a sense of the struggle that can occur around masturbation even without the "triggers" of online pornography and sophisticated adult materials.

> At age 13 I discovered a world of self-applied ecstasy—and was immediately addicted, masturbating up to six times a day. This was a "high" I hadn't experienced before. Those first four years I wasn't completely sure if it was right or not. Then at seventeen, someone made a

confession at church for selbst beflectung. I asked mother what that meant after we got home and was shocked to know that I'd actually been sinning all this time. Although I had been guilty before, by this time I masturbated every time I took a bath or a shower. I could not go do this act without masturbating. Fantasies always led up to my acting out in masturbation. In real life I was shy and bashful to women. In acting out I made advances and charmed them into having sex. Every woman I knew—every girl at school, young folks, women at church—every one became a potential sex partner, even though after each acting out was over I felt extremely guilty. I loathed myself. I hated myself. "I will never do this again," I often decided. I often thought of how to quit, and wondered how to do it. I finally decided on castration, though I couldn't bring myself to go through the pain.

I knew my problem would quit after I married . . . but what a surprise. This did not come to pass. Masturbation and fantasies seemed to be better than the real deal. With masturbation you could control when and how. Everything was smooth, warm, perfect. No bad smell, bad breath. No waiting for the woman to thaw out. No pimples, cellulite, wrinkles or fat; everything was perfect in the mind's eye—except for the guilt.

Finally at age 25 I was ordained a minister, and for a month I could feel—literally in the air—the prayers of the church to help me. The presence of the Holy Ghost was in the air. During this time I was not tempted, and by practicing a daily relationship with Jesus I have remained clean for five years now. Though every day one has to recommit to be clean; has to recommit to love his wife no matter what; has to recommit to have a daily relationship to adore and revere the Lord. Although the eyes are still attracted to the opposite sex, the fantasies are no more, and daily I die to self. I still have to struggle, and by looking back 10 years, 5 years, 2 years, and 1 year, I still see progress. My relationship with my wife has increased tremendously since she has become the apple of my eye. I have also become a different person since I delight myself in the Lord.[9]

Confession and Repentance from Sexual Deviations

Catholics who adhere to the hierarchy of the church have the experience of confession. At times these devout individuals may choose to admit sins

that are particularly troublesome and unburden their hearts. Those who commit to a 12-Step program are also familiar with the need to confess to another (Step 5: "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs"). And yet these are decisions to share discreetly. They acknowledge culpability to a single trusted individual.

Imagine your minister, rabbi, or imam assembling your neighbors and relatives. There is no choice about those who are liked or those who are trusted. This is an organized religious body, and they will hear the truth, however sordid. On your knees in front of the assembled members, you will be told to confess your sin and repent, asking forgiveness. (Even those sins that are known only to the ministers, allowing a vague confession of wrongdoing in public, often find their way into the more general knowledge of the church.) "Forgetting" lies in the future and rests on the willingness of those assembled to actually lose the memory, a questionable assumption at best. Rather, they are more likely to "ignore," failing to recall the sin again once the consequences have been meted out and served. At the moment there is only the shame and humiliation of exposing embarrassing and at times heinous sins to this slice of the community. Titillating details may be avoided, but the principle behaviors will be known.

This is the stern, disciplinary side of a collective culture. It may seem cruel from our perspective, but from theirs it maintains balance and order in separating from the world and maintaining a pure heart. To join the Amish church is a choice—a choice made with full awareness of this hierarchical, patriarchal system of justice. One's life is routinely open to inspection.

The breakdown occurs, not in its rigidity or even the shame and humiliation the system creates. If we examine the impact of sex offender registries, incarceration, and the judicial system, it seems fair to state that we engage in a parallel process that results in shame and humiliation for sufficiently severe "sins."[10] The breakdown occurs in the failure to recognize the need for support and intervention to make a lasting change in paraphilic behaviors. Rather than face the reality they know to be true, the repetitive nature of "deviant" sexual acts, the Amish assume that these behaviors, as with many other "sins," can be effectively managed with repentance and confession. Unfortunately, more than one church member reports multiple confessions, multiple consequences, and a failure to change over time until finding outside help or support . Even the minister in the vignette above who overcame compulsive masturbation found a friend who held him ac-

countable for his behavior. Others seek counseling within or outside the community.

Addressing Sexual Sin

One of the greatest needs—and one of the most difficult areas to address with the Amish—is sexuality. Three broad areas create opportunity and risk for the professional.

First are areas of sexuality that are morally ambiguous but do not pose a threat as we define it. This would include same-sex interests, transgender issues, transvestism, fetishes, or other paraphilias that may be troubling to the individual but are neither illegal (or for which the statutes prohibiting them are not enforced), nor a risk to others. For many the only "outlet" to even acknowledge such aberrant behaviors will be an English professional who is willing to listen in a nonjudgmental manner. Individuals who are more invested in the community are less likely to find a neutral stance alluring, as did the adolescent in the vignette that opened this chapter. An older mother who had experienced same-sex desires over the course of her marriage was relieved to find a listening and nonjudgmental ear, but she felt no obligation to change her commitment to her husband or the church because of it. Another risk is only occasionally broached but will become more problematic as the Internet proliferates on cellphones. This is a compulsive interest in adult sexual materials online. Certainly, a percentage of adolescents in Rumspringa have no hesitation downloading sexually explicit pictures and "sexting."

Second is the area of sexual knowledge. The Amish are reluctant to allow their children formal sex education. Brochures such as *Walk in the Light* and *A Fence or an Ambulance?* encourage discussions of a "good touch / bad touch" nature, but they do not explain these concerns or the intricacies of sexual intimacy in detail. The opportunity to encourage parents to develop some form of communication about sexuality with their children can be useful, but it must also respect the limitations of the particular community and church with which the professional is working.

Third is the area of sexually coercive behavior. Adolescent females may feel pressured into being sexually active either with a single partner or to retain status within a group. Likewise, if a husband complains to a bishop, a wife may receive a visit from him or from a minister, encouraging her to be more open to sexual relations with her spouse. One bold woman faced

down her bishop on just such a visit. He told her that her husband had "needs" and that she was failing to meet them adequately. She replied, "Well, I have needs too! What about me?" Her response left him speechless. Child sexual abuse must be addressed directly and firmly, although once the issue has been brought to the attention of civil authorities, there is often less overt resistance from the family or church. In regard to sexual coercion, it becomes a matter of empowering women within the submissive role of their culture as well as encouraging a sense of self-assertion in sexual behavior.

As professionals, we will vary in our alignment with the Amish on the "sin" inherent in specific sexual behaviors. Regardless of our stance, it is important to respect their beliefs and work within the paradigm of sexuality that they develop in order to intervene effectively.

CHAPTER 7

Violence and Abuse

In the gathering dusk, a light snow had begun to fall. Despite my fatigue, there was the prospect of a long drive home. And still I had promised a session to a deeply troubled teen. He had sexually abused his younger sister over an extended period, and without the intervention of her Amish schoolteacher it would doubtless have continued. Raised in a family that was highly suspicious of "the world," he was carefully insulated from it, having earlier attended the same school and been surrounded by Amish neighbors. Counseling was court ordered or it would simply have been rejected. The discovery, shame, and remorse, combined with the intrusion of professionals into his life had been much more traumatic than anyone anticipated, hence the need to visit him this evening.

And so I arrived at their farm. The view through the window was a room bright-lit with a gas lantern, its harsh glare illuminating the poignant tableaux. The family was gathered at the table, heads bowed in the prayer that ended their meal. My delayed knock brought his mother to the door, the sad smile with which she always greeted me in place. Everyone was at home, and there was no privacy except my client's bedroom. Beggars can't be choosers, as the saying goes, so we sat on a dilapidated couch and looked across the cramped room, out frosted panes of glass at a snow-covered tree, barren limbs rising ghostly and cold beyond the rumpled bed.

As clients are wont to do when we are least prepared, he began to share from his heart. Against the backdrop of laughter and snatches of Dutch conversation drifting throughout the house, in the warmth of that second-floor bedroom, he spoke of his confusion, his fear, and his

guilt. When I looked into his eyes, they seemed riveted on the snowy branches outside, but I soon realized his gaze was transfixed on the bed where all occurred that had changed so many lives. I no longer remember what I said in return. The words matter little. What matters is that as he shared emotions contained far too long, he was reliving the full horror of the abuse he had perpetrated. And in those moments my presence, enforced by the court and Child Protective Services, resented by both him and his family, was no longer a burden. In those moments he reached out from his need and closed the gap between us.

I have done home visits before and since. Nothing differed about the demands of that evening. What differed was the aftermath of the session. Not only did we struggle to find a way for him to ask forgiveness from his sister and learn to empathize with her plight. Not only did we struggle to find a way for him to ask forgiveness for himself. We struggled in parallel with what it meant to be Amish and to find himself trusting an English counselor. We struggled with what it meant to share so deeply and intimately an emotionally shattering experience with someone who would separate and no longer be part of his world, much less his life. And we struggled with what it meant to debunk, at least for a time, the stereotypes of "English" and "the world" as treacherous and sinful.

I have not seen this young man in several years, and yet because of the nature of the community I can track him quite well from a distance. He joined the church and married. His sister is dating at the time of this writing. I have no idea if he monitors me, but I suspect that he does. We know too many people in common for him not to remain informed, albeit from a safe distance.

The "pacifist" stereotype is exploited both within and outside the Amish culture. Resistance to participation in armed conflict leads the casual observer down a carefully marked path, perpetuating the myth of a "gentle" people who refrain from violence in all forms, as if the use of coercion and force can be rationally excluded from the human experience. In truth, they fall prey to the darker emotions as frequently as any other cultural group.

Certain types of physical force are accepted. Adolescents and young adults will speak without rancor about spankings administered by arms

muscled through intense physical labor. They acknowledge the physical pain, but it is the same pain that their brothers and sisters experienced for similar misconduct. It is anticipated and brief, and with the exception of true physical abuse, does not concern them. They may be spanked at home or at school, depending on their age and the type of misbehavior. It is a form of violence used, in both their perception and the perception of the adults responsible for them, to shape character.

Amish culture, then, willingly incorporates physical aggression (corporal punishment), which we more often face with ambivalence. Beyond specific boundaries, however, violence is abhorred in their culture as well. For example, the relatively common fights that occur among young adolescent boys are quickly stopped by adults who witness them, and blatant physical aggression against another is not condoned. At the same time, they struggle with the boundaries created by the patriarchy in the home and in the school. At what point can or should the clergy interfere with excessive force? When should the problem of "domestic violence" be addressed? When has a schoolteacher overstepped appropriate boundaries with physical punishment of a child? In a culture built on a hierarchy of authority, subverting a role at any level is a risky choice. At times the balance between violence and authority tips in favor of violence to avoid the risk of violating the hierarchy. The results can range from sad to tragic.

This chapter explores the intertwined issues of domestic violence and physical and sexual abuse against children. These experiences are underreported, in part because of a reticence to approach outside authorities, and in part because the victims of such violence often fail to perceive themselves as victims.

Domestic Violence: Hiding in the Shadows

Hey Joe, where you going with that gun in your hand?
I'm going down to shoot my old lady
You know I caught her messin' 'round with another man.[1]

This classic Jimi Hendrix lyric is a reminder that patriarchal attitudes toward women are neither new nor uncommon. There is also a familiar, heartbreaking pattern as victims of domestic violence become survivors. The journey is neither rapid nor steady, and interventions are sadly ineffective.[2] It involves indecision, confusion, and divided loyalties before

these victims (predominantly women) can make the choice to assert their right to be respected and stop the abuse.[3] There are clear parallels between English and Amish in this regard, particularly as regards the "object" status of females.

Because the Amish are relatively insular and communities are reluctant to allow surveys and reporting, estimates of social problems such as domestic or intimate partner violence (terms used interchangeably here) vary widely. In one study, based on a probability sample of nearly three hundred Amish women of childbearing age in Eastern Pennsylvania, only two reported that their spouse had "pushed, grabbed, shoved, or slapped" them in the past twelve months. None of them reported being hit, beaten, or forced to have sex against their will.[4] This finding, of course, reflects only one investigation in one particular Amish subgroup and should not be generalized to all Amish communities; nor should it be assumed that respondents were uniformly truthful, since the interviewers were strangers to the respondents and were highly unlikely to have been given valid answers to such personal, probing questions as domestic violence and depression.

To place the risk in perspective, estimates suggest that 15 to 20 percent of couples among the broader U.S. population experience at least one episode of intimate partner violence annually.[5] Among couples with a male partner entering substance abuse treatment, the number skyrockets to 60 percent.[6] Lifetime prevalence studies find that 20 to 30 percent of women will be assaulted by an intimate partner, and 5 to 20 percent of children will observe a parent being assaulted.[7] Perhaps the ultimate disturbing statistic finds that on any given day domestic violence shelters in the United States house approximately 67,000 women and children.[8] If these percentages are merely comparable among the Amish, the problem is epidemic in their culture as well.

Victims of domestic violence are occasionally aware prior to their marriage or commitment to a relationship that their significant other poorly manages anger and has issues with control.[9] In an insular community many women are well aware of their potential mate's behavior. All too often love, a sense of urgency to marry, or other pressures blind them to the severity of the problem. Once in a committed relationship, the abuse escalates. Stress within the marriage, including an expanding family and financial concerns, can increase anxiety or depression in a male partner and heighten the potential for violence, if it previously exists, as an outlet for

dysphoric emotions.[10] Because intimate partner violence occurs within the context of the broader relationship, the victim may initially feel a swirling sense of confusion. Apologies or remorse enhance the belief that the perpetrator can change without outside intervention. At the opposite extreme, controlling behavior can lead the wife to believe that if only she is properly submissive, the abusive behavior will subside. Over time, despite her efforts to be dutiful, it frequently escalates, and gradually the victim adjusts to this new pattern of life and the helplessness it engenders.

Attitudes toward the use of alcohol vary between Amish communities, from an expectation of abstinence to its recreational use at family gatherings. Regardless of the community standards, however, alcohol abuse remains problematic for at least some individuals in every settlement. Again, no statistics are available that address the Amish specifically, but an increasing body of evidence suggests substance abuse as a causal element in intimate partner violence.[11] There is no clinical reason to believe Amish culture differs substantially in this regard. The link between violence and substance abuse suggests that a provider addressing one issue may need to investigate the presence of the other.

Family, friends, and perhaps neighbors often know of ongoing abuse in an Amish community. Still, awareness does not translate to action. Victims may engage in multiple efforts to reach out to others, at times in a tentative, testing manner, at other times in a frantic desire for help. The hierarchical nature of Amish society normally limits the help that can be provided. A brother may informally stand up for a sister, but equally possible is an unwillingness to confront another male about his position in the family. The same dilemma occurs if the clergy are involved. Some may take a strong stand against domestic violence. Equally possible is a reluctance to interfere with the father's role. Women who are victims of violence (or find their children victims of violence) may literally be told that just as Jesus suffered, we suffer as well.

As responses to entreaties result in little change, family and friends exhaust their attempts and the victims themselves learn that little good will come of their cries for help. It requires the intervention of trained professionals to complete the process of extricating victims, supporting them as they leave their homes, insisting on the arrest of the perpetrator, and separating from relationships that have virtually imprisoned them, potentially involving a dramatic and traumatic separation from the community.

Much of the descriptive material in the previous paragraphs could

just as easily describe English victims of intimate partner violence. It is in the power structure that surrounds domestic violence that the Amish victim is unique. The woman's role is submissive. She yields to the authority of the man on the basis of biblical injunction. This is a primary tenet of Amish society, folded into the larger view of Gelassenheit. The bishop and ministers who confront a case of domestic violence are challenged with the greater of two evils: inversion of the God-given roles of men and women, or tacit acknowledgment that abuse has occurred. The logic that pervades a decision to encourage a woman experiencing violence to remain in an abusive relationship is clear, if maddening, to those outside their beliefs. This life is a temporary existence, fraught with pain, lived with the hoped-for purpose of gaining eternal life. It requires adherence to God's plan, and that plan is outlined in God's word, the Bible. The greater evil, then, is to risk the eternal soul by allowing temporary physical succor. Women (and children) are asked to bear their pain in Jesus' name for the hope of a greater glory.

The extremity of this logic may seem ridiculous—indeed, bombastic chauvinism—to those who first read it. How could anyone purporting to care for others believe in this degree of suffering? Yet within a religious culture, God anticipates obedience to certain expectations, and it becomes second nature to fulfill them, regardless of the discomfort or pain.

There is a parallel here that is uncomfortable to consider but that nevertheless explains all too much. Just as women who are repeated victims of domestic violence fall into a role of helpless resignation, so too the clergy who passively accept the presence of such violence fall into a role of helpless resignation in the face of their religious beliefs. They fail to grasp that their work within the hierarchy from man to God involves their active participation. Instead they live in fear of stepping outside His will. In this sense they too are victims, unable to assert the responsibility that comes with their role, bound to the perceptions of a community that watches them as the model for behavior.

That said, the Amish are far from cultists who blindly allow their people to experience abuse without compassion. Increasingly, leaders recognize the cancer of domestic violence and work to stop its spread. One program in particular is an organized attempt to address these issues.

The Sewing Circle

The Sewing Circle is a loosely organized group of Amish women. At its core are survivors of domestic violence and friends or family members of those experiencing such violence. Each survivor has separated from her husband for some period of time. Some have attempted reconciliation, while others remain resigned to a lifetime apart. None contemplate divorce, for this would violate their Ordnung. Virtually all have also struggled and perhaps physically relocated to find churches and bishops who support their quest.[12]

The group initially formed with the specific purpose of presenting a seminar on domestic violence at an international conference on the Amish held at Elizabethtown College in 2007.[13] The presentation itself was radical because no group of Amish women had ever publicly spoken on this issue before. They offered their perspective in a low-key, inoffensive manner, teaming with English professionals to offset the impact of their presence. Nevertheless, for the remainder of the conference and for some time afterward, it was these women, and not the professionals with whom they presented, who were in communication with numerous individuals and agencies seeking information and guidance or simply wishing to talk.

In typical Amish fashion, after such a bold move little was heard from the group for many months. They dispersed and might have served their purpose: a committee that met, presented at a conference, and disbanded. Instead, a series of voice mails and phone calls between the original members, tentative at first, then bolder, offered the possibility of an ongoing project and united them once again. Over two years, they met periodically and developed a 40-page booklet titled *Doorway to Hope*.[14] Soliciting stories from communities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana as well as smaller affiliations in several other states, their publication specifically seeks to serve Plain people communities.

In addition to stories that describe the experience of living with domestic violence, *Doorway* includes sections for clergy, professional counselors addressing domestic violence among these groups, and guidelines for victims seeking help. As of this writing, approximately 2,000 booklets are in circulation and a second publication is in distribution as well.

Child Abuse: The Silent Cry

The effort to shine a light on child abuse means a panoply of numbers, but no guarantee of accuracy in these statistics. Between 2007 and 2010 *reported* victims of child abuse nationally averaged 10 per 1000 children, varying by state from 1.3 to 24.6 per 1,000.[15] Females are more likely to experience abuse, particularly sexual abuse, and to suffer prolonged trauma.[16] The journey of recovery takes many roads and may include external supports,[17] the ability to share the pain through family stories,[18] the ability to express anger,[19] or hopeful expectations for the future.[20] The statistical and research anomalies highlighted by these disparate findings argue for the difficulties of defining child abuse and "recovery." It follows that creating useful definitions in a collective culture in which women are submissive becomes even more complex.

Almost all Amish people describe a similar culture of silence surrounding the topic of sexual abuse, an important consideration in any intervention.[21] There is universal agreement that it is unacceptable. In parallel however, few acknowledge this abuse because of the ramifications. In some cases, a disclosure projects blame onto the victim, particularly if external authorities are involved. In other cases, the community gradually evolves the "problem" into the decision to report rather than the abuse itself. These potential outcomes pressure the victim (and the victim's family) into silence due to feelings of guilt and responsibility.

Some Amish identify the patriarchal ministry as a potential barrier to reporting, particularly for females. Younger female victims of male offenders are often aware of their low position in the hierarchy, both in an absolute sense because of their gender and age, and in their perceived lower status relative to the offender. As is true in mainstream culture, well-respected persons are less likely to be reported. It is inherently difficult for those raised in a community prizing peace and consensus to expose the wrongdoing of an adult church member. Cultural forces push the victim into silence.

Another difficulty in confiding to the ministry is their lack of experience and expertise for dealing with child abuse, either sexual or physical. The unpaid lay clergy have an eighth grade education and no theological training or professional training in counseling. Men, chosen by lot, usually serve for life. Many of the clergy express a profound awareness of the

responsibility placed upon them. As a part of this duty, they recognize that they are expected to counsel members about a myriad of problems that occur throughout their lives, yet they are also expected to enforce church discipline with these same problems. Moreover, in these small congregations of thirty or so households, the ministers typically have many relatives, a further complication to reporting and dealing with abuse. While lay people identify specific ministers or bishops that they perceive as more receptive, many also see the ministry as a whole as lacking confidence or experience in this area. Not surprisingly, the ministers themselves frequently acknowledge their discomfort in confronting child abuse.

Another significant issue for the ministry is the conflictual relationship between statute and beliefs. By law, child abuse must be reported. Agencies will then work to ensure the safety of the victim, while the justice system determines appropriate rehabilitation and/or punishment for the perpetrator. Amish parents desire to protect their children no less than do non-Amish, but cultural values minimize the punishment for offenders. Sinners are to be counseled (as defined within their culture) and given the opportunity to confess and repent before the church. After appropriate consequences (often a period "under the Bann," or brief shunning) they are received back into the community, and the sin is forgotten. To confront a sin that has already been confessed and forgiven is considered un-Christian. For this reason, dealing with child abuse becomes paradoxical. The church cannot deal with abuse in the customary manner of "forgive and forget" and simultaneously bring the situation to the attention of the authorities.

A paradox can also occur in that the church holds authority only over baptized members. Still, even if the individual is in Rumspringa, has rejected the church, or is currently under the Bann, if they retain ties within the community these individuals may not be considered solely under temporal authority. The reluctance to report is still present in these cases in which a "member of the community but not the church" is an offender, but the church has little authority to discipline. The only potential influence may be coercion of family members.

Yet all too often child abuse occurs with impunity. One wrenching story was written by a daughter who experienced a father who was abusive not only to her mother but to the children as well. In this case, the ministry chose not to interfere with the patriarchal role.

I am a grown-up now. An adult. But I still have memories from my past. Scars that forever mark my soul. My dad was an angry man, and abusive to us, his family. I will tell you a story that happened when I was 13.

One evening after school, we scholars didn't go right home. We first went over to the store to buy a songbook I wanted. It was an unusual thing to be so bold about what I wanted, because I knew the consequences that could be, but I was determined. Unfortunately Dad happened to find out on an evening when he was brewing anger and ready for an outlet. He went outside and got a big leather strap and told me to come downstairs into the cellar. I was scared. Our cellar was old and dank with poor lighting. I felt like I was going down into a dungeon, into the unknown, with a man that was angry beyond reason. The door closed behind us. I was shut off from help, from light.

He preached to me first. I don't remember what he said. Then he said he was going to whip me.

"Hold up your dress. I will strap you ten times and I don't want to hear you cry. If you do, I will start over. Do you understand?"

I was terrified and bit my lip. I was at his mercy and I knew it. The blows came. I remember counting them. One. I endured it. Two. Maybe I'll make it. But then it got worse and I wasn't really there anymore. I remember praying. I remember wondering, "Why is Mom letting him do this?" Then that was over. I thought we were done. No. He talked to me about a wrong I had done in school and about how I combed my hair. He said he was going to spank me for that too. So he did. And I didn't care anymore. I screamed and cried and tried to get away. There were glass cans sitting on the floor. They were kicked around. I was in the hands of a madman. I was desperate. I was all alone. No one came.

Finally it was over. My head scarf was flung into the corner. I was shaking. I was exhausted. And Dad was so self-righteous. He had now disciplined his daughter.

My legs were bleeding. I went straight to bed and cried myself to sleep. Before I went to sleep, I remember crying out to Jesus. And He was there. A peace came over me, and it comforted my soul. I slept. I woke up so wounded, so afraid, and so angry. I needed someone to show me a safe place. I needed someone to hold me and comfort me and cry with me. It caused me to be so afraid of my Dad and of a system who

let it happen and didn't recognize and punish it as evil. It also created a hardness, a toughness. I was very bitter.

The healing has been a long hard journey. The scars in my heart may always remain, which makes me sad. But through it all, I also see God's hand in my life; in the people He sent to care, to love. In the people who showed us what He is like. And who believed in us.

I will give you beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning . . . Thank you Jesus.[22]

Tragically, a system in which sins are confessed and forgiven without the need for true intervention is indicted once again. The story points to the sense of helplessness an Amish victim can feel not only within the family but within the broader community. If a bishop and the ministers of a church adopt the attitude that a husband and father is head of the home and that his rule supersedes the church's right to intervene in the interest of the well-being of family members, victims are left at the mercy of a tyrant.

The temptation to censor the Amish for this failure is strong. But once again we are required to turn from our own perceptions and see the world from their point of view. "Forgiveness," in the Gelassenheit worldview, is an essential component of Amish spirituality. In October 2006, Charles Roberts took an Amish schoolhouse hostage and shot ten young girls before turning the gun on himself. Regardless of our compassion for those who experience a mental illness, we recoil in horror at such a brutal and senseless act. Yet the Amish began immediately to forgive, an attitude that literally transfixed a watching world as they practiced a fundamental tenet of their beliefs.[23] A woman on a rural road near Shipshewana, Indiana, veered too near a curve and struck and killed a young Amish boy on his bike. She was horrified at his death and could not believe that his parents came to her home, offered comfort, and asked that she attend the funeral.

Whether mass murder or a single tragic accident, the concept of forgiveness is deeply rooted in their culture, although they do make a distinction between forgiveness (letting go of feelings of bitterness and grudges) and pardon.[24] Amish church discipline related to members involves both forgiveness toward an offender and pardon. Yet when they forgive (and pardon) what we perceive as equally cold-blooded behavior against a child, we are aghast. "How can they forgive a child molester? A child abuser? How can they not punish him for such horrible crimes?" We are at a loss

to understand their apparent tolerance for intolerable behavior. We fail to recall that it is the same forgiveness that earlier caused us to stand in awe. The Amish do not see themselves as having the freedom to categorize sins as "forgivable" and "unforgivable." In their belief, the death of Christ frees those who believe from all sin. Once we understand this concept, we better understand their intransigence in addressing what we perceive as heinous crimes.

Breaking Ranks: Reporting Abuse

Even so, there are situations when individuals or families "break ranks" and choose to report abuse to the authorities. In some areas church leaders will not initiate a report to social services agencies or law enforcement, but neither will they censor such reporting by others. Some bishops express a belief that cases of abuse should routinely be reported to the law and that Amish offenders should not receive preferential treatment. Other bishops believe situations should be handled within the community without the involvement of state authorities.

A number of lay members believe that implicit sanctions will be imposed if external reporting occurs. One male, himself a victim of abuse as a child, said those who report to the law will be asked, "Couldn't that have been handled in the church?" A wife and mother stated that if a church member reported child abuse to her bishop he would question her veracity. She also believed the bishop would want to speak with the victim to ask why the abuse occurred and what the victim did to cause it. This is consistent with a frequent belief that victims bear partial responsibility.

As part of its mandate, the clergy must maintain the boundaries of the church. Reporting child abuse to someone outside that structure without permission is perceived as a threat to its autonomy and authority: "prideful" or "nonsubmissive" behavior. In addition, it may be perceived as threatening to the values of harmony and consensus, since it would be an individual decision with significant impact on the entire community. If clergy or entire churches agree to report child abuse to government authorities, there would not be the same possibility of sanctions on the reporter. However, this type of consensus is unlikely. It defies the expectation that individuals bear pain and suffering as a sacrifice to the need for peace and stability within the community, in emulation of Christ.

Another concern with the traditional approach of confession is its ten-

dency to focus exclusively on the offender. Too often the suffering of the victim becomes secondary to the struggle of how to respond to the perpetrator's sin. Furthermore, the suffering of the victim is often mistakenly believed to be easily healed through the practices of forgiveness and submission to church authority. In a spiritual context, victims are not as clearly in danger of losing their salvation as long as they forgive the offender. In contrast, the offender has committed a sin and must engage in confession and repentance, forcing the church to focus its energies there.

We ask the Amish to violate a number of tenets of their faith by reporting child abuse. We ask, first, that they trust in "the world," a world they have been taught is a dangerous and evil place. We ask that they turn to the state for help and violate a tradition of self-sufficiency. We ask that they involve themselves in a large and impersonal bureaucracy when they are most comfortable dealing in trusting relationships among their own people. We ask that they quickly absorb the intricacies of a civil and legal system that is confusing even for those of us who cope with its complexities on a daily basis. We have little patience for their need to return to the community, consider their options, and develop some form of consensus on any decision. And we ask that they violate the sanctity of confession by prolonging the consequences of a sin that both the perpetrator and (often) the victim believe is now washed clean with the blood of Jesus.

A system that relies on the public community to report—and by community I refer to physicians, schools, churches, concerned relatives, noncustodial parents, neighbors—is simply ineffective for them. As a result, anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that child abuse is underreported. Creative alternatives are necessary to intervene in this population.

Creative Solutions

The effort to advocate for victims and punish and rehabilitate offenders requires an integral involvement with their communities if it is to be effective. Three primary interventions work well.

First, courts and Child Protective Services recognize the need for victims to have placements with relatives if they cannot remain in the home. Such placements keep a traumatized child in the culture and avoid the further shock of an English foster setting. They also signal the willingness of the state to work with the community and respect the values that are paramount there.

Second, monitoring of offenders can be managed within the community. Rules limiting involvement with children, which are integral to many safety plans, may be unenforceable in these communities, where social events and activities are central to the culture and children and families would be hard-pressed to find a way to create "adults-only" gatherings. However, families may be willing to create supervision webs in which the offender is always within sight of a responsible adult.

Third, Amish residential programs have begun to work with state authorities to provide services for offenders. The efficacy of these programs in changing behavior has not been validated. However, neither is there universally agreed validation that prison-based or residential-based programs housing non-Amish offenders are efficacious in providing treatment for this population. These homespun programs have the advantage of encouraging a team approach between Amish leadership and state agencies and do not risk stopping further reporting for fear of the consequences. Each of these possibilities is discussed in greater detail in upcoming chapters.

Any response that will be effective involves an integrated effort with the Amish community. Without such communication and a team approach, victims will continue to be victimized, and offenders will fail to receive help.

CHAPTER 8

Death and Loss

An older parent was bringing his developmentally delayed adult daughter for a psychological assessment. Since his wife's death, he could no longer provide the full-time care she needed and sought placement in a sheltered workshop that required documentation of her disability. I had seen grieving spouses before, but the loss in this man's heart spoke of a love and devotion that had left him truly bereft. The story he shared confirmed my suspicion.

His wife's illness had been painful and prolonged. He provided her care and suffered alongside her. In those waning days of life, he rarely left her side. On a Saturday in late spring the death rattle began, and with his hand clasped tightly over hers, she slipped away. Believing as the Amish do, he hoped for her salvation but did not claim assurance. To do so would be arrogant. Yet with her body now lifeless, he found himself praying for a sign—an acknowledgment that she was at peace.

The next morning an English neighbor appeared on a visit of consolation. With no awareness of the spiritual struggle this lonely man faced, the ministering neighbor described an incident that had occurred the previous night, coincidentally at the very moment of her death, and had left him in awe. "I heard such a beautiful melody," he said. "I have no idea who was singing, but it sounded as though it came from heaven itself." And with that remark, the grief-stricken husband knew the answer to his prayer. God had offered the song of the angels carrying his wife home.

Whether we believe in a divine breath that whispered life into the molded sand, or the slower but no less miraculous process of evolution, the exquisitely intense emotional depths of birth and death are phenomena unlike any other. Regardless of our view of what lies beyond the physical realm, these anchors at the extremes of life speak to the mystery of existence in a way that no other moments can.

Because of the power of death, every culture develops ritual means to address it. The Amish are no exception. Yet, as the vignette opening this chapter suggests, no ritual can adequately explain its personal meaning. With this awareness of the dual nature of grief as both an idiosyncratic and a shared process, embraced even more strongly in a collective society, this chapter addresses the experience.

Attaching Meaning to Death

There is a stoicism pervading the Amish march toward death that masks the intensity of emotions accompanying the end stage of life. At its best, a collective culture provides support and empathy in the shared experience of loss. At its worst, it suppresses deviations from expected grief. The Amish firmly believe that life in this world is a temporary sojourn. Its ultimate purpose is to claim hope for an eternity in paradise. God ordains events. Death does not occur without God's awareness and ultimate design; therefore, to question a death is to question both the omniscience and the will of God. If it occurs due to accident, injury, or even through malice, to fail to forgive is an affront to humility and respect for God's plan.

These are basic and inviolable tenets, grounded in the primary theology of both the Amish and fundamentalist Christianity. This pervasive understanding imparts meaning to even the most senseless and brutal deaths, as the response to the slaughter of innocent children at the Nickel Mines School demonstrates.[1] Furthermore, it provides a common bond to the family and community in times of suffering. Simultaneously, the idiosyncrasies of grief may be overlooked. An elderly woman lost two sisters in the space of a few weeks. These deaths heightened an awareness of her own mortality and the poignant reality that her remaining family was dwindling. Another man lost his elderly father after a long battle with cancer. Several years later he remarked in passing that he had never been able to grieve that death. Still another woman lost a sister to a long and debilitating illness, a sibling who had left the Amish many years prior.

The rift between them was never completely healed, and the pangs of grief were sharper because of this fact. In each case, the grieving party felt comfortable sharing with an English friend. The sense of loss would have been heard by fellow Amish but potentially viewed askance. In each case the expression of grief fell outside a range of emotional experiences that could be comfortably shared within the community. Rather than risk the raised eyebrow or inquisitive tone, it was easier to remain quiet than to seek support from those to whom they were closest.

As the vignette that opens this chapter and the descriptions above imply, for the Amish no less than any other, the experience of grief can be isolated and isolating. In some ways, the cultural means of coping with death are merely an overlay. It is the human condition to be terrified of pain, of dying, and of being alone, and in moments when we face these inevitabilities, the power of the emotion overrides all other thoughts or experiences. Yet the moment passes, and we grope for the structure of the familiar—the cultural anchors that allow us to cope with these fears and uncertainties. Still, we do well to remember that beneath the reserve and distance from the world, whether death comes in the fullness of time for an older parent or the tragic loss of a younger child, all human beings react with a rhythm culled from their own emotions.

Ritual and Death

Change is slow and methodical among the Amish. The liturgy and church service is one of the least modified of all their practices, and the funeral is no exception. Customs vary in different areas, but Wittmer's account of his mother's funeral in the mid-1950s remains hauntingly familiar.[2] Some of the specifics have changed, but the emotional tenor of the event is largely accurate today:

> We were confronted with typical decisions faced by outsiders at such a grieving time. Tradition took care of these decisions. My mother was buried in a simple ceremony in an unmarked grave in an Amish cemetery. There were no flowers of any kind, no tent and no artificial grass at the burial site.
>
> The casket was placed in my parent's bedroom, and a kerosene lamp remained lighted 24 hours a day. The light was dimly lit, and I remember the eerie shadows it cast as people came in and out of the room to

view the body. No one sat in this room, but from time to time people would get up from other rooms and walk into the bedroom, view the body and then quietly return to their sitting place in another part of the house. This was indeed a somber occasion.

Early on the morning of the funeral the buggies began to arrive again. . . . At nine a.m. the first minister stood and began delivering a sermon such as one would hear on an ordinary Sunday at an Old Order Amish church service. He used this emotional occasion to plead with all young people present to follow church (to follow church means to take instructions for six weeks and become a member if sixteen or beyond) and lead a life such as my mother had led. In about an hour the second minister stood to preach the main sermon. His approach was also personal and direct. . . . The third minister delivered a short obituary after which everyone kneeled for a long prayer. Then all present formed a line and viewed mom for the last time.

The hearse was one of our regular two-horse wagons with three spring-box type seats pushed forward. The casket was pushed into the wagon. . . .

The cemetery, a small, plain field located in the midst of the Amish community, does not have gravestones such as are seen in modern cemeteries. Unaware outsiders do not realize that a cemetery is even located there.

As we left the cemetery my father told his family that there would be no reason for us to return to my mother's resting place. She was no longer there, and I have never returned.

Several scholars reiterate the substance of the traditions Wittmer describes above.[3] The casket is a simple wooden box. The body is dressed simply and without adornment. Although normally bodies are embalmed, more conservative affiliations may avoid this practice. Among some groups singing takes place during the funeral, while for others hymns are only read at the service as well as at the graveside. Widows wear black as a symbol of mourning, often for one year post-loss.

Another aspect of death that is central to the community is support from extended family and neighbors. The bereaved family anticipates, and will find itself supported by, daily chores, meal preparation, and arrangements for the funeral itself offered by community members who divide responsibilities and relieve those struggling with grief from these onerous tasks.

This camaraderie, every bit as much as funereal symbolism, is integral to their tradition in the earliest stages of mourning.

As professionals we do well to remember that this aspect of Amish life is inviolate. Whether the loss is an infant, a child in a farm accident, an adolescent in an auto collision, or an elderly family member slipping the bonds of earth, the same tradition is anticipated and will apply. And whether our role is investigator, health care provider, or supportive social service personnel, we remain peripheral to the demands of the culture.

Again, we need to consider the potential conflict from their point of view. Not only the bereaved family but the portion of the community that is most intimately connected with them is poised to provide comfort through a time-honored ritual that assures that a collective process of grief continues its appropriate trajectory. "The world" then intrudes with its demands—expectations that we see as appropriate and that perform a logical function. In the heightened emotional state of grief, however, we are asking a people who have long been cynical of the world and who overcome that cynicism only with deliberate care, to trust us over the culture and familial supports to which they turn in a time of deep emotional need.

An Amish man died in a fall from the roof on which he was working. The county coroner, newly elected, demanded an autopsy as required by law, delaying the release of the body. His predecessor had been lax, frequently waiving this requirement in cases in which the cause of death was obvious. The resentment spawned by this decision to narrowly follow legal procedure spilled from the community in which the incident occurred to foment resentment among several affiliations about statutes that impinged on their religious beliefs. A compromise finally addressed their concerns, but the entire issue could have been resolved much more quickly had greater tact and sensitivity been shown to the family of the deceased and his community at the outset.

Death across the Life-cycle

Researchers acknowledge the importance of cultural context in understanding the stages of grief. Yet culture alone cannot reliably plot its course. Family, too, has an essential role.[4] As in so many areas, there is little empirical research to support assumptions about the Amish, but extrapolation from existing data is useful.

Autonomy and self-reliance are two factors that allow grief to resolve for adults who lose a parent.[5] In the loss of a spouse, women grieve to a point of resolution more successfully than men. One hypothesis suggests that this is because women are more expressive and confrontive with their emotions.[6] With the loss of a child, parents are better able to resolve grief if there are other children in the home.[7] However, a sense of alienation from each other and from external support systems remains problematic, suggesting the devastating impact of the loss of a child on a parent regardless of the circumstances.[8] The extent to which these findings apply to the Amish, with their collective Christian emphasis, is difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, with larger numbers of children and greater support from extended families, an extrapolation from existing data suggests greater ability to resolve the grief arising from the loss of a child. Individual factors may be more prominent in resolving the loss of a parent or spouse, particularly with the anticipated submission for women and the patriarchal role for men. Furthermore, membership in a closely knit network of thirty or so families in the local church district and an extended family network of dozens of people living nearby means that those who grieve death are surrounded by an understanding and supportive community. This fact is a distinctive Amish feature, regardless of how fundamental or progressive the affiliation is.

Still, an individual is faced with multiple losses across the course of a lifetime: the tragic loss of an infant, child, adolescent, or adult to illness or unexpected accident, or the anticipated and sometimes pain-relieving loss of an elderly family member. For the Amish, all these fall within God's plan. His eye is on us as on the sparrow. With that promise in mind, God must be involved in each and every action.

God is in control of a grand design, but what does that control mean? Are acceptance and forgiveness mandatory emotions, lockstep expectations following death? A woman in a community far removed from the Nickel Mines shootings spoke of her willingness to forgive the perpetrator of that multiple murder, yet she simultaneously commented on the inner struggle to achieve that forgiveness. Over the years, others have acknowledged that forgiveness is a process or a journey, not a destination. The *act* of forgiveness may precede by many months, or even years, the same *emotional* experience. The child lost to tragedy, the seemingly senseless death, the much-loved individual taken too early can each create a grief that hin-

ders an emotional closure. In that painful morass of emotions, individuals struggle with their faith and wonder if, indeed, God's eye truly rests on that sparrow.

Some Amish clergy and churches accept such doubts as a natural response to emotional provocation. Others view them as compromising the integrity of one's faith and encourage prayer for acceptance of God's omnipotent and omniscient will. If such prayer is healing and brings peace in place of inner struggle and pain, then the collective response to grief is effective. If such prayer fails to resolve lingering doubts, the individual is left with fears that cannot be effectively expressed to the community and risks a weakening of the very faith the church attempts to support.

Will of God or not, questioning occurs more frequently when death is premature. Regardless of the manner of death—accident, illness, or malice—the early demise of a significant relationship can raise the specter of doubt as to an overarching plan. Recall that much of Amish theology is grounded in a daily life devoted to Christian service and that critical thinking is devalued. With this pragmatic approach, the emotional impact of premature death and the accompanying grief can be one of the more powerful experiences that leads many to an existential quandary in which they question the purpose and meaning of their lives.

It is here, perhaps, more than in many areas that professionals who develop a close relationship serve as a bridge. Whether we offer a route to shelter or further pain depends on the manner in which we respond. And yet frequently cultural beliefs provide emotional support through even the most difficult times.

I arrived at an Amish home moments after a neighbor's two-year-old child was crushed by a tractor. The crisis was deepened by the fact that the child's grandfather had been returned to the home a few days prior, recovering from a massive heart attack. He was now in distress as well, and two emergency vehicles rushed into their winding drive.

I stood with a cluster of Amish people across the road, watching and speaking in low tones about the events unfolding across the way. Police, emergency service personnel, and extended family all found their way up that quiet country lane. The difference between Amish family members and those who had left the church was striking. The Amish were stoic and calm, while those who had left and now lived non-Amish lives were clearly distressed as they raced toward the house. As our

group expanded and the situation was explained, questions were carefully phrased. "Is she gone?" or "Is she no more?" No one asked bluntly if the child had died.

In the days that followed, I spoke with several of the people present. There was a quiet, measured grief. The loss that accompanies the death of a child is a void that follows the family throughout their lives. And yet there is a certainty that this gentle soul sees heaven, spared the suffering that a full life-span would inevitably bring. There is an unwillingness to bring to fruition the questioning of God's plan that is second nature to those of us who explore grief as a multifaceted image, encouraging ourselves and others to do so as a means of achieving resolution. For the Amish, prayerful support, "presence" of family and friends with the simple awareness of the pain one experiences, and the enveloping care of the community serve the same purpose without the introspective angst. In large part this reflects the high-context culture, in which information is assumed rather than verbally transmitted.

Grief over the death of those who have left the Amish is more difficult, tinged by a sense that support is less intense or its duration less prolonged than is true for those who die baptized into the church. An Amish mother lost an adult son in an auto accident. His funeral was held according to the customs of a nondenominational Christian church. Her extended family and friends were supportive, but she recognized the distance and lack of quiet strength that would have been present had her son been baptized Amish.

In the world of the English professional, questioning is often a sine qua non. Whether law enforcement, social service, mental health, or health care, we face the consequences of unanticipated and violent death on a routine basis. It is an evil that pervades our society. Thus, there seem to be few in our professions who fail to ponder the mystery of life, at once so fragile and yet so vital. We live side by side with friends and family whose understanding of the meaning and purpose of life differs from ours, and yet we are at peace with ourselves and with them, rarely considering how deeply we may differ in our understanding of a higher power, the meaning of life in its broadest sense, or our tolerance for religious and social diversity. Our analytical style has taken us to a point at which we resign ourselves to the complexities that surround us.

The Amish are aware of this. Frequently, their effort to separate them-

selves from the world includes a distance from the very questioning that is essential to our being. When I have had the bad form to confront an extremely intelligent friend with the differences in worldviews that we hold, she gives me a wry smile and says "That's just one of the mysteries," refusing to engage in a disagreement about beliefs and viewpoints. In other situations, the argument is closed with a version of the calm but emphatic statement: "You can't get away from what the Bible says." For these purpose-driven people there is little advantage to the critical thinking that goes with deep analysis or the existential contortions that accompany questions about the purpose and meaning of our presence on this earth. Rules exist for a reason, and life is to be lived in a traditional and routinized manner. This concrete viewpoint leaves little room for the abstract.

Sharing the experience of grief with anyone is a difficult task. The most sincere efforts at support can be perceived as clichés. The best-intentioned comments dig deep into the wound. With the Amish, support in times of grief can be even more difficult. Normalizing the human experience can be helpful, but at the same time it can negate the Christian values that form the foundation of their beliefs. For example, it is normal to feel anger toward a higher power or simply toward the unfairness of life that allowed a loved one to be taken. For the Amish, acknowledging this anger may contradict the entrenched belief that God is omniscient and omnipotent. Although the emotion may be acceptable for more progressive clergy, the belief is not. Rather, listening and reflecting back feelings and statements, and indicating an accurate and empathic understanding of the individual's current distress is a safer and more effective support than attempting to facilitate the direction grief should take.

Whether in the hospital, hospice, around the kitchen table, or in other settings, non-Amish providers need to recognize the power they hold in these situations. It is a moment given to listening, to reflecting on what is heard, and to respecting the inner struggle that is shared, however obliquely, from one human being to another. At these moments Amish persons have chosen to leave their culture and confide in others. If they are not to regret that decision later, providers do well to respect the intensity of the moment and avoid inserting their own values into this hushed and painful time. By doing so, they demonstrate a respect and caring that is essential to ongoing relationships.

The Grief of Separation

As I turned into the drive, several family members were hard at work in the yard. An older son separated himself from the others and walked over to greet me. Amish expressions are often difficult to read, but his was unmistakably grim.

"Jerry jumped the fence," he said, and I nodded, keenly aware of the sadness, anger, and frustration behind this cryptic statement. He was sharing the ultimate decision of an unmarried brother who had joined the church several years prior. Increasingly restless and dissatisfied, Jerry had renewed his driver's license and begun taking a company truck for errands, at first late at night, but more recently in bold daylight forays. He was also rumored to have rented an English home. Since it was the first of the month, he had taken his belongings and moved there, making the announcement of his decision as he left.

The formal departure from the church would still require time. He would be visited by the deacon, placed under the Bann, and eventually excommunicated. Although communication with his family would be restricted, in his community the depth of that restriction would depend in large part on his spiritual decisions. If he chose to align himself with a church similar to Amish beliefs in its theology, his defection would be tolerated and the restrictions eased. Still, these palliative measures would do little to relieve the burden for his grieving family.

Those who leave the community prior to baptism are better tolerated than those who leave after the rite has occurred. A part of the rite is a promise to remain faithful to the church across a lifetime, a vow that is not taken lightly. Just as the vow of marriage is sacred, so is church membership. In either case, however, whether leaving before or after baptism, there is a sense of loss for all concerned.

The status of those born into Amish culture who choose to leave becomes a shadowland because of their history. Raised in a collective society that distances itself from the world, they are now part of that very world. They often vacillate between a fierce loyalty to their former sect and a dismissive disgust for all things Amish.[9] Likewise, their family who remain distanced from the world are faced with an individual who is still kin, speaks Dutch fluently, and has lived intimately within the confines

of their insular community. This person is now "of the world," but an odd hybrid not easily categorized.

The forgiveness for which the Amish are lauded (and criticized) is not easily extended to those who leave the church due to the inherent tension between the rebellious party, a "jerkover" (midwestern slang) or "yankover" (eastern slang), and those who remain. For all concerned there is an uneasy peace at best, and open conflict at worst. Because retention rates nationally hover at approximately 90 percent, one in ten will leave, a statistic indicating that virtually all families experience the pain of this loss. The grief surrounding these defections can encompass a variety of emotions. For parents, a child's decision to remain in the world or to leave after baptism involves a loss of face. There is an inherent assumption that a "good" parent succeeds in keeping children in the church. There is also the question of salvation. For those who settle in churches with similar theology this is less problematic, but some who leave also wander from the strong fundamentalist Christian beliefs with which they were raised. Furthermore, a former church member's interaction with the family is not easily resolved. Although the Bann defines limitations for sharing meals and socializing, these rules cannot cover every situation. For the family left behind, the process of grief and loss is marked by the effort to understand what aspects of the relationship have been permanently lost, and what aspects can be recovered or resolved.[10]

The member who has left also struggles with a new role. There is a loss of identity, friendships, purpose, and meaning in life that accompanies separation from the church. Some may attempt a complete break, but many remain integrally involved. This may take the form of an effort to "rescue" others from the grip of the Amish, perceiving them as misguided or even as caught in the clutches of a cult.[11] Others express an intense resentment and join in a fellowship of similarly displaced peers that allows a post-Amish camaraderie. And still others maintain ties with their family and as much as possible with former friends, attempting to bridge the risk of isolation that now pervades their relationships.

The underlying attitudes faced by former Amish range from the openly tense to the socially awkward, as the following social interaction illustrates:

> My wife and I were dining with an Amish couple. As the four of us entered the restaurant, we met an English-appearing couple that our

Amish friends knew well, and both women began speaking Dutch. The English-appearing woman and my wife wore similar striped blouses.

After being seated, our friends discreetly explained that the woman had been Amish but had left the church several years before and married an English man. Upon leaving, we passed them again, and exchanged pleasant good-byes. Once beyond their table, the Amish wife turned to us and said in a disgusted tone, "Look at those stripes!"

While amusing, the story highlights the double standard that exists for those who leave. As an English woman, my wife was allowed to wear a patterned blouse without censor. For a former church member, however, such fashion was a bold statement and an insult to her heritage. Those who leave have an understanding of the sect that eludes those of us born outside the pale. And yet those of us who have never been Amish are not under the scrutiny that those who "jump the fence" experience. The pain of loss for all involved is always present.

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CHAPTER 9

Counseling and Psychotherapy

I had seen her in a variety of counseling settings, from my office to her home. With the dual roles that often occur in tightly knit Amish communities, I had also seen her in settings outside counseling proper, creating an ethical conundrum endemic to this work. By association with others who knew me as a friend, she was aware of more of my background than are most of my clients. This created a comfort for her and an ongoing source of uncertainty for me.

We sat one evening watching the sun settle on the horizon. Her children had tethered a pony to a small wagon. They giggled and laughed aloud as the animal trotted up and down the lane. An older son had already taken a buggy, intent on visiting a girlfriend with whom he was seriously involved and would likely set a date for marriage sometime early next year. Chickens scratched and clucked across the road. A dog ambled toward us, tail wagging. It was an idyllic moment in a summer scene, marred only by my knowledge of her husband's tragic death and his history of infidelity.

As we sat in the sultry heat, she turned to face the fields ripe with corn and in a faraway voice asked, "Why do men do that?"

I knew the meaning behind the question. In her grief, she was struggling with the years of lies, promises to reform, and repeated confessions and forgiveness in church that had soured their marriage. My response could have been "therapeutic." I could have probed for her feelings, asked her to elaborate her concerns, even empathized with her pain. Instead, I chose to answer honestly. Based on my knowledge of her home life, I outlined the fear of intimacy her husband seemed to experience, the difference for men between sex and love, and the role

of submissive women as factors in allowing his behavior to continue unchecked. I also carefully indicated that these were explanations but not excuses. While her behavior doubtless contributed to problems in the marriage, partners remain responsible for their own conduct.

Twilight had settled by the time I was through, and we sat quietly for several minutes in the gathering gloom, interrupted only by the sound of children at play and the pony's hooves on the packed dirt of the lane. Had I gone too far? Was it time for another question? Should I process what had just occurred? My mind was spinning with alternatives that I assured myself would further the session but that in reality would only serve to quell my anxiety.

At length she spoke. "Why couldn't the ministers have told me that?" she asked. "When I talked to them, all they ever said was 'If you were a better wife, he wouldn't run around.'" Her question needed no response. We sat together in the pain of her misunderstanding, grief, and loneliness, which was finally dispelled by a wave of children breaking over us with stories of their ride.

This vignette suggests the power and promise of counseling with the Amish. It also suggests the slow cadence, respect for empathy and listening, and empowerment so necessary for effective work. This chapter expands the model outlined above that holds promise as an intervention technique.

Background

Each "counselor" brings unique skills and gifts to the session, based on a combination of education, training, and life experience.[1] Yet equally important are the expectations and life experience of the client. For the uninitiated, the interaction pairs the trained mental health professional, schooled in a series of theoretical frameworks yet lacking an accommodation for Amish life, with a novitiate to the therapeutic process. In turn, the client is poised to reject any and all rubric, voiced or not, that runs counter to deeply held convictions. To call the situation "challenging" is a bold understatement.

As a general rule, the Amish eschew critical thinking. There is little recognized need to analyze, probe, and explore interpersonal and intraper-

sonal problems in depth. The explosion in "self-help" and self-understanding that correlates with the larger culture's pop awareness of syndromes such as depression, anxiety, and mood disorders has largely bypassed them. Rather than analyze dysphoric emotions, they are likely to provide passive support, listen, or pray as means of addressing their own emotional pain or the pain of another. Hard work and a commitment to structure and routine are the antidotes for personal ills. There is little tolerance for perceived self-pity. For many, an emphasis on community cohesion, family and group life, and expected practices override the urgency for an individual to experience a sense of happiness or peace in this earthly realm.

Amish clients may have experience describing an issue or emotional problem. They may even have experience with a limited form of cognitive reframing, having been told that worry is a waste of time, and to focus on important concerns. However, they are less likely to have experience with more sophisticated forms of cognitive or cognitive-behavioral treatment, nor are they likely to have invested significant amounts of time in developing insight or exploring existential meaning. The same series of dynamics occur for the client referred by court order, with the added complication of resistance to treatment. Their eighth grade education is an important consideration: critical thinking is no more necessary in one's personal life than in business.

Add to this the novelty of sitting with an English stranger, one-to-one or even as a member of a family, with the anticipation of sharing deeply personal information, and the challenge of counseling with an Amish client becomes clear. Some of the information to be shared may be known to the community, but that remains "confidential." After all, only the community knows. Some of the information to be shared may be known to the church, shared in confession, but again that remains confidential: confession is a private matter. And some of the information to be shared may be more discrete, secrets held at various levels of the family or by the individual, previously undisclosed in such a brash and alien manner.

The vast majority of counselors today identify their skills as rooted in an eclectic theoretical background, drawing from the rich diversity of approaches to treatment that demonstrate an evidence-based validity. Two theories that are particularly apropos to work with the Amish are Person-Centered Therapy (PCT), the current evolution of Carl Rogers' humanistic approach, and Feminist Therapy (FT), a broadly construed theory that over-

laps PCT in its client-centered focus but additionally emphasizes power as an essential dynamic within the therapeutic relationship. These seemingly disparate models can be intertwined to apply a powerful paradigm.

Person-Centered Therapy (PCT) and the Amish

Rogers' theory is sometimes considered static and a historical footnote to the current efforts of therapy. In reality, it was fluid and dynamic across the course of his career, but because of its identification with a single theoretician, the principle tenets have remained much as he posited them toward the end of his professional life.[2] A principle hypothesis of his work that now dominates counseling asserts that clients are most knowledgeable about their own lives and best equipped to make changes. It is this foundation that makes PCT such a useful vehicle for work with the Amish. As counselors in a cross-cultural setting, we cannot help but engage our beliefs, biases, and inherent sense of morality. We are asked to work with those who submit to a patriarchal system, deny their own well-being for the common good, often appear obstinate in the face of logic (as they respond to a Supreme Being rather than to temporal authority), and live a system of values that can, paradoxically, be both awe-inspiring and repugnant. If the foundation of counseling theory asserts that the client, living by this markedly different set of values than ours, is the decision maker in the room, our cultural struggle is narrowed to issues of basic dignity and respect.

The integration of Rogers' primary theory came in a 1957 paper, since called the "integration statement." In it he describes the conditions necessary for counseling to occur:

1. Two persons are in psychological contact.
2. The first, whom we shall term the client, is in a state of incongruence, being vulnerable or anxious.
3. The second person, which we shall term the therapist, is congruent or integrated in the relationship.
4. The therapist experiences unconditional positive regard for the client.
5. The therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and endeavors to communicate this experience to the client.

6. The communication to the client of the therapist's empathic understanding and unconditional positive regard is to a minimal degree achieved.[3]

Rogers also refers to "congruence" as "genuineness" in his writings, and this has become the more familiar term. Much of the definition of "genuineness" corresponds to Gelassenheit—the sense of detached contentment, although for the Amish it reflects a yielding to the community. Genuineness as a construct in counseling refers to an openness and a yielding to the possibilities of joining in a relationship with another human being, and a willingness to express these potentials. The Amish understand, anticipate, and can respect this type of openness from a counselor much more than an officious or hierarchical approach. The latter carries an assumption of authority that has not been earned. The counselor, whether met by court order or otherwise, has only temporal authority and is "of the world." To respond to the client with genuineness is to mirror Gelassenheit.

Although Rogers initially parsed unconditional positive regard and empathy, more recent interpretations of PCT integrate these constructs.[4] Empathy is considered both a manifestation of, and means of communicating, unconditional positive regard. This is perhaps the most misunderstood construct in the PCT approach. Empathizing with a client's worldview and communicating an unconditional positive regard for these feelings does not reflect an uncritical acceptance of thoughts and behaviors. It does acknowledge an understanding of the human condition and the emotions that spring from it. For the counselor practicing PCT, the client has worth, regardless of actions or behavior. It is this essential worth, bestowed simply by virtue of one's existence, that is given unconditional positive regard. Following this logic, if an individual has worth and should be regarded as worthwhile, then persons in counseling relationships have the right for their worldviews to be understood and to have them accurately reflected back. To do so does not mean that the counselor agrees that the view is morally correct or appropriate. It does mean that the counselor understands the client's viewpoint.

The Amish client can present with a number of beliefs that challenge our morality. A wife and mother can present as submissive to her husband in a way that we find personally offensive. A husband and father can assert his dominance over his wife and family. Using PCT we are asked, as

painful as it may be, to step into their worldview and explore choices for making sense of life from their perspective. We are then asked to reflect back our understanding of their choices. In doing so, we need not approve or positively sanction their decisions. We are merely asked to indicate that we understand the emotional, psychological, and social forces that drive them to make the choices that they do. In so doing, we respect their cultural beliefs.

However, there are limitations to PCT. This approach assumes that the client is optimally primed for self-motivation. Within the Amish community passive support is more common than active problem-solving for interpersonal and intrapersonal issues. Therefore, the client provided solely with PCT would likely respond with this same passivity. It may be helpful to find similar support in "the world," but it will hardly be efficacious in creating long-term cognitive and behavioral change. PCT has been posited as a foundation for other therapeutic approaches, either as a concurrent process[5] or as the beginning and/or ending phase of therapy, with more active and directive approaches implemented in the middle phases.[6] Feminist Therapy strongly complements the existing PCT approach.

Feminist Therapy and the Amish

At first glance, Feminist Therapy (FT) and the Amish might seem a glaring oxymoron, particularly for those who are familiar with FT as a political challenge to patriarchal cultures. Admittedly, its tenets cannot be exported wholesale. Nevertheless, its fundamental principles can be incorporated. Egalitarian counselor-client relationships, the empowerment of clients, and an interdisciplinary emphasis that broadens the traditional parameters of psychotherapy allow this theory to be tailored into an intervention with a unique fit for Amish needs.

Although FT is not associated with a single proponent, two publications are often considered fundamental to its development. Weisstein's *Kinder, Kuche, Kirche: Psychology Constructs the Female* (1968) critiqued the extrapolation of feminine psychology on the basis of scientific research and theoretical constructs developed by and for the masculine gender. A later publication, Chesler's *Women and Madness* (1972), more directly addressed the inequities women experience in counseling. These early writings and the professional discussions surrounding them led to the egalitarian principle as bedrock for FT. In one sense, this was a logical extension

of PCT, with its belief in the primacy of the client's self-understanding to create effective change. FT broadens the equality emphasized in PCT, however, urging the counselor to empower the client in all aspects of her life by modeling equality of power within the client-counselor relationship. In the vignette that opens this chapter, had I chosen merely to empathize with the Amish widow who was my client, I could have maintained my role as counselor. By responding honestly and directly to her question, however, I expanded that role and demonstrated an equality in the relationship by directly discussing the dynamics of her husband's behavior. Her sense of that equality was displayed by her response: "Why couldn't the ministers have told me that?"

FT also posits all therapeutic interventions as political in nature. In this model, counseling functions to empower the client.[7] The feminist counselor does this by respecting the client's present methods of empowerment. Alternatives are suggested in such a way that they have equal merit with the client's current efforts, and she feels comfortable rejecting them. In doing so, the counselor maintains the integrity of the client's system of power, avoiding a patriarchal approach and respecting her beliefs. Generalizing this model to the Amish avoids creating a conflicting hierarchical system.

This expansion of equality and respect for power is an essential component in therapeutic work with either gender. As counselors, we assume a circumscribed therapist-client relationship: clients view us as experts with a series of delineated goals that we help them attain. A part of the therapy process may be assisting them in defining or refining these goals, but our work occurs in the context of offering an understanding of cognitive, behavioral, and affective interactions and experiences, and intervening with these as appropriate to increase a sense of well-being or to increase the likelihood of acting in socially acceptable ways. In contrast, the Amish often lack such preconceived notions of our role. If we are seen as "expert," then they frequently respond passively, much as they would with a physician. Their role is then to be treated, not to actively engage in the process themselves. FT provides a model to motivate the client without usurping the role of guide.

FT encourages self-disclosure in the client's interest. Rather than a model of transference/countertransference phenomena, FT posits that events experienced by the counselor, client, or both can symbolically be introduced into the relationship and influence the power differential.

These symbolic experiences need to be confronted and addressed as they occur, an emphasis on counselor self-disclosure.

This may, again, be paradoxical to the training and experience of many mental health professionals. For multiple reasons, we are taught the "evils" of self-disclosing in the counseling relationship. Primary among these is the risk of cadging the counselor's own therapeutic needs at the expense of the client. And in fairness, self-disclosure is a two-edged sword, capable of inflicting damage as well as healing. At the same time, the potential for equality and empowerment and the respect for cultural values merit its cautious use with this set of clients.

PCT encourages self-disclosure of affect and immediate experience. FT broadens the scope by encouraging the disclosure of broader information and analysis of the relationship. If we ask these clients to enter into a therapeutic alliance and to truly trust and work with us toward a common goal, we are asking them to breach an expectation as codified as the Ordnung, no less an imperative because it is ephemeral rather than written, to maintain their distance from the world. This very act and the thoughts and feelings that surround it—the decision to trust a person who is English—deserves discussion. We can ask no less in return than sharing our own experience when persons of their sect breach that expectation. In so doing, we meet the primary criteria of both PCT and FT. This interaction also models the openness that will need to characterize the therapeutic interaction if it is to be successful.

As mentioned earlier, FT cannot be imported in situ, due to its emphasis on overcoming patriarchal behaviors. However, this does not mean that its tenets cannot be employed to assist those in the Amish community who are oppressed by the patriarchy. Just as any social network maintains a hierarchy of power, that network will create the potential for, and experience subsequent abuse of, that same power. FT offers a useful paradigm for work with clients who struggle with the abuse of power despite the need to accept the overriding structure.

The construct of "micro-aggressions" has been used to describe subtle, daily reminders of devaluation and disempowerment to those targeted for oppression and discrimination.[8] This is a particular risk in a patriarchy. Because some lives can be devalued, these lives are more at risk. FT encourages persons who experience micro-aggressions to examine how they have been taught to constrain dysphoric emotions and to consider alternative means of empowering themselves. In so doing, the oppressed are

encouraged to develop a sense of equality consistent with their station in the social hierarchy.

In considering micro-aggressions, the most obvious transgressors are the clergy. The vast majority struggle to uphold Christian principles of compassion and fairness and are men of integrity. However, there are some who rule with disdain, neglecting the well-being of those in their care. Likewise, the majority of Amish fathers and husbands are well-meaning and compassionate men. Still, some struggle with their own demons, and as a result they intimidate family members and even aggress against them.

The counselor meeting with an Amish client who experiences micro-aggressions (male or female) may feel the need to "rescue" the hapless victim or excoriate the perpetrator, particularly since tales of such abuse may be couched in terms of acceptable hierarchical behavior. At this point, the counselor does well to remember (a) unconditional positive regard, and (b) alternative strategies of empowerment. Unconditional positive regard involves empathizing with the client's worldview and understanding (although not necessarily agreeing with) the perceived social structure that gives this individual meaning and purpose. Only when clients can accept, at a cognitive and emotional level, that the counselor understands them, will they be able to formulate alternative plans for empowerment. Again, these are not "better" plans. These are alternatives that the client may wish to implement. If the counselor criticizes the victim or imposes a "better" plan, ironically, the client is disempowered once again, and a primary purpose of counseling is undermined. The counselor who criticizes the perpetrator without developing a relationship of trust has potentially attacked the foundations of the culture and demonstrated a lack of genuineness in the therapeutic relationship.

Examples

Amish life is not carefully parsed in the way that we separate aspects of our own. Family is not clearly distinguishable from church, which in turn is not clearly distinguishable from community. Paid employment may take members into the world. Nevertheless, work at home, either as part of the maintenance of the property or for additional income, blends seamlessly into family and community life. In this context, if we carefully delineate our role as "counselor," creating boundaries with office space, prominent displays of licenses and degrees, emphasis on completion of forms (lest

the paperwork gods be angered!), and explanations of the boundaries and limitations of our roles, we have sent an unequivocal message: "Your importance to me, and my importance to you exists only within this hour. Beyond this time, you do not exist to me, and I do not exist to you. Accordingly, all that happens here, all that is said here, and all that you gain here remains here." This is hardly the message we hope to impart. Yet for a people who are accustomed to interacting with "the world" as an existence separate from their own, such interaction is common practice. An egalitarian, empowering approach with Amish clients is more difficult.

One of the most effective interventions is home-based service, even for individual counseling. As I noted elsewhere, I have done sessions glancing up through basement windows and across the fields out attic dormers. I have sweltered through the heat of summer and shivered through the cold of winter. By doing so, I have met clients where they are most comfortable. Although some freely share their foray into mental health, others feel more at ease without prying eyes in the waiting room who are either curious English or may themselves be Amish wondering about their fellow sojourners on this questionable trek. In particular, the latter may feel a sense of entitlement to know the reason for a counseling visit, given the collective social culture. Home-based work requires more time and resources than meeting in an office, and in an era of limited funding and personnel, it may be unrealistic in many counseling practices. Still, if possible, it is a useful resource.

As has been noted, the scope of combined PCT/FT need not "fit" in traditional boxes. The following example describes work with an Amish client that extended well beyond traditional counseling sessions.

An Amish man was arrested for abusing his daughters. He immediately confessed to the police and was released on bond, pending a trial. Although he reached a plea agreement, I was asked to testify at his sentencing hearing.

Once incarcerated, he continued to correspond with me. He had begun to work with a 12-Step program for sexual addictions and spoke in a letter of his frustration and anger over my comments in the sentencing hearing, although he did not detail the comments themselves. I wrote back, asking him first to share what I had said that hurt him. He replied at length, and in my return letter I apologized and asked his forgiveness. I explained that in the examination and cross-examination I was

overwhelmed in my attempt to balance my role as his advocate with an ethical set of responses, and had failed to consider his feelings or to consult him afterward as I should have done. In his reply he mentioned that ever since he was a young child he had felt that people did not listen to him and that he was overlooked. He also felt that this contributed to the anger that led him to molest his daughters and thanked me for speaking with him honestly.

My initial response to his letter of complaint had been one of frustration. I remembered the sentencing hearing well. This offender was represented by a court-appointed attorney, but one who was extremely skilled. Furthermore, on the day in question the rural courtroom was packed with members of the community, and while his lawyer grilled me mercilessly, endeavoring to squeeze out every last positive comment I could possibly make about his client, I found myself walking a tightrope to maintain a fair and balanced appraisal by realistically acknowledging his risk to the community, potential for rehabilitation, and both my concerns about and hopes for his behavior. To find him hurt by my testimony was irritating.

Then I considered his situation. As a counselor, I gave him unconditional positive regard. I could see the world from his perspective. It mattered little what I thought. What mattered was his perception. It was important to empower him. Using an FT approach in order to maintain as much equality as possible I wrote, a free man writing a prisoner, English writing Amish. I considered Gelassenheit and the need to achieve peace between us. With all these considerations in mind, it was much easier to write and ask his forgiveness. His return letter reinforced that I had made the right decision as he shared his insights about his own sense of disempowerment in a hierarchical culture.

There are times when empowerment can be humorous as well:

His look was typical Amish adolescent. In the early stages of Rumspringa, he had cut his hair in the latest fashion, but the charges that led to his court-ordered counseling were at odds with his quiet demeanor. Week after week he would sit impassively, waiting me out or responding politely to my questions. Week after week I struggled to find a way to "connect" with this young man who elevated passive resistance to an art form.

Finally, as a session began, I said, "Do you ever say to anyone, 'Screw you?' (substituting an expletive phrase inappropriate for this book)." With the first true change in expression I had observed, he looked startled and said, "No." I replied, "Well, if you ever want to, this is the place you can do it." I was gratified to notice that his stare was no longer dull and vacant, although he now appeared ready to bolt and run.

As the session wound down, I shared that I had talked with his parents and made arrangements for him to receive a psychological assessment. My concern was the possibility that he was significantly depressed, but because I had worked with him and wanted another opinion, my colleague would complete the testing. With some care I outlined the procedures. During this time, he slouched forward, elbows on his knees, and carefully studied the bare floor in front of his chair. Finally, I said, "You know, I really have no idea what you're thinking right now." Without missing a beat, he retorted, "I'm thinking how much I want to say 'Screw you!' "

With that exchange, an adolescent male found himself empowered in the counseling relationship. I could not stop laughing, which (he later told me) pleased and frustrated him simultaneously, and also opened the door to genuine sharing between us. He continued to struggle with expressing anger. Not surprisingly, situated near the middle of seven children, he often felt lost and unheard. However, he learned alternative ways to empower himself, as opposed to the socially inappropriate and passive-aggressive methods that were his primary mode. In later years he joined the church and continues to do well.

The use of PCT and FT together is certainly not the only workable paradigm that can be employed with the Amish. It remains for each counselor to develop the skills that bridge their client's separation from the world and allow a meaningful exchange and purposeful interaction in the counseling session, whatever theory is employed. However, the aspects of both these theories that are integral to effective treatment include emphasis on genuineness and appropriate self-disclosure. Counseling with the Amish is ultimately a process of sharing, one person to another, in a therapeutic mode.

CHAPTER 10

Substance Abuse and Addictions

At nineteen years old he held steady employment in a factory, owned a vehicle, ran around with friends, dated sporadically, and attended parties virtually every weekend. He had also been arrested three times for underage drinking, the second time spending a night in jail and the third time gracing the facilities with a more extended stay after violating his probation. It was following this third offense that I was called to meet with him, a recalcitrant youth who seemed unable to control his substance use despite these numerous "wake-up calls."

We met at his home, often retreating to his bedroom. Since he was the middle child of seven, enough siblings had married to allow him the luxury of his own space in the house, but enough family remained to make privacy a premium. Nothing in his room attested to the double life he lived. Memorabilia from baseball and football, bow-hunting equipment, a closet filled with English clothes, a small assortment of Amish outfits for weddings, funerals, and those other occasions when his appearance would be judged, and several utilitarian pieces of furniture suggested a typical Rumspringa. Few knew the struggle he waged with multiple addictive drugs.

In many ways this young man was an aberration. Unlike the stalwart peers with whom he was raised, his friends were as often English as Amish, and he wavered with the decision to remain in the community or separate and join the world. His use of illegal substances did not reflect a family history of abuse. Rather, it seemed an outgrowth of his effort to self-medicate and escape the pain in his life as he considered the choice of walking away from his heritage.

There are stories of success, and there are stories of hope. This young

man's ambivalence about his Amish roots also meant that an English counselor was held at a distance. He successfully completed his probation, and with that he ended his counseling as well. We had discussed his drug use and integrated the 12 Steps with information from his court-ordered groups. I attempted to motivate him to internalize responsibility for his behavior. Still, as our time ended he remained a troubled and addicted young man.

The Amish attitude toward illicit drugs is clear and straightforward. They are unacceptable anywhere at any time. Obviously, universal attitudes do not equate with the ability to enforce universal restrictions, but the shame and guilt associated with their consumption keeps it a closely guarded secret. Tobacco, having been grown as a cash crop in a few settlements, has a more checkered past, and its use is tolerated by some.[1] Other groups strictly prohibit it. Although its use is increasingly disapproved, there are some "diehard" smokers in certain settlements, particularly among Amish men. Attitudes toward alcohol span the continuum from communities that enforce abstinence to a few groups in which men imbibe as a usual and customary practice on a daily basis.[2]

The use of substances in Amish communities is omnipresent and often stirs media coverage. The most notable and famous incident in recent years was the 1998 Lancaster arrest of two young adults trafficking in drugs with a motorcycle gang.[3] That arrest led to increased mainstream American scrutiny of Rumspringa and served as a springboard for journalists to seek out the problem of drug use among the Amish, as a more recent article on methamphetamine abuse in Ohio suggests.[4] What these stories fail to highlight is the limited professional understanding of the frequency, duration, and trajectory of substance use and abuse in these communities. Because of their reluctance to share such intimate and potentially damaging information, there is simply no generalizable data on substance abuse among the Amish. One study did survey attitudes toward substances among Amish and English junior high students in a public school setting.[5] Comparing a sample of approximately five hundred youth in each group and interviewing over a period of four years, the authors suggest that Amish youth perceive their non-Amish peers as using a greater range of substances with greater frequency (a perception likely based in fact). However, they also expressed stronger intent to use alcohol and tobacco

than their non-Amish peers. This is consistent with anecdotal reports that the three drugs used and abused among many Amish youth are alcohol, tobacco, and—for a plurality within this "using" group—marijuana.

While there are major gaps in understanding patterns of substance use, much less abuse, among the Amish, this chapter focuses on interventions with those who are either abusing alcohol or other drugs or at risk for such abuse. Because the majority of those who will be identified to professionals are in Rumspringa, much of the emphasis here is on adolescent programming.

Framing Addiction Services for the Amish

Three powerful historical trends shape more general addictions treatment. In 1935, Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith launched the model now known world-wide as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Jellinek (2006) categorized alcohol addiction to include a Disease Model, one of the most enduring in the field, although awareness of genetics[6] and a more interdisciplinary approach[7] have advanced alternative theories. In the early 1970s, researchers demonstrated that some persons with addictions spontaneously or "naturally" recover, challenging long-held assumptions. The hue and cry was vociferous, but it served as an opening for clinicians in mental health to provide services as well.[8] As a result, "addiction" now covers both substances and behaviors (e.g., gambling, sex, online activities) and a much wider spectrum of potential treatment interventions. At the same time, a plurality of addiction treatment for substances remains the purview of the traditional Disease Model and its modifications. Still, cognitive-behavioral interventions that focus away from a dynamic approach and emphasize management aspects are gradually gaining favor.

Amish culture is well suited to intervention through AA or 12-Step programs (an integral part of the AA model). An emphasis on relinquishing personal control and recognition that an addiction must be managed through support by a community and by a higher power meshes well with Amish beliefs. Nevertheless, the need for ongoing responsibility and accountability can counter the need to confess, forgive, and forget that is also ingrained in their theology. Successful programs rely on an integrated model that tacitly assimilates these beliefs. Intersecting issues include the attitudes of a specific community toward alcohol use, and the age of those involved in the program.

Many communities tolerate alcohol use among adolescents during Rumspringa, although the degree of tolerance varies. Some families see such use as a natural progression in adolescent development. Others maintain a "zero tolerance" policy that translates in practice to "don't ask, don't tell." Attitudes toward adult alcohol use show even greater variability. Some communities allow beer or liquor at family functions, while others are appalled by such behavior. Such distinctions vary slightly with conservatism (ironically, more fundamentalist groups maintain more tolerant views toward alcohol use) and appear to be predicated on traditions that are geographic and community-specific. This does not mean that alcohol use does not occur among groups in which its use is discouraged. Both alcohol and tobacco are routinely consumed in all areas. It is the frequency and transparency with which these behaviors occur that varies.

While the 12-Step program pioneered by AA has both strengths and weaknesses, as a practical matter it stands as the best choice to offer support to those in the Amish community who abuse or are dependent on alcohol. The alternatives currently in practice (e.g., Rational Recovery, SMART Recovery) promote a cognitive / behavioral approach that omits an emphasis on a higher power. While this encourages community support, the implicit assumption that the individual is capable of recovery without supernatural intervention runs a greater risk of being offensive than the traditional AA model. Although in recent years it has moved from an emphasis on "God" to a "Higher Power" to accommodate a wider range of beliefs, the substitution is easily remedied in a group that believes in a Judeo-Christian God. The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions are as follows:

12 Steps:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him.*
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

12 Traditions:

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never to endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. AA, as such, ought never to be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than pro-

motion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The emphasis on group cohesion over the individual; the limited focus on the purpose of the group, which minimizes the potential for AA to become too great a distraction in their lives; and the anonymity that is synonymous with their need for humility allow this model to interface cleanly with existing social structures. At the same time, the comfort level in attending and participating, particularly in "closed" meetings (that is, meetings open only to self-identified alcoholics) can create a problem for Amish people. As might be expected, this falls on a continuum. Some express no difficulty sharing. A problem with alcohol is universal and transcends barriers with "the world," particularly in a meeting in which all are acknowledging their own helplessness and the need to turn to God. Others find the opportunity to share intimate details of their lives uncomfortable in a public setting. Still others may believe they have confessed and that "forgiven and forgotten" does not fit with the AA tradition of relating stories and memories as a guiding path for newer members.

At least some communities overcome these obstacles by establishing their own meetings. Open exclusively to the Amish, these groups practice the principles of AA but retain community boundaries. In the same manner, Al-Anon (support groups for the families of alcoholics) provides services for those affected by alcohol abuse. Such insular meetings partially shield the Amish who are arrested for a variety of alcohol-related crimes (e.g., public intoxication, driving buggies under the influence, etc.) from programs that are problematic from their perspective. Particularly in the rural areas the Amish inhabit, addiction counselors themselves often owe their sobriety to a life-changing spiritual experience, a Christian conversion. As such, these counselors embrace fundamentalist Christian beliefs, including the need to proselytize. In this way they subtly but clearly express their own beliefs or encourage the testimony of others in substance abuse classes and groups. The Amish find this an awkward experience since their tradition encourages "witnessing" via passive presence rather than active communication. The same is true in English-based AA meetings in which many stories of recovery involve the life-changing power of a Christian God.

The efficacy of integrated alcohol and drug programs compared to programs exclusively for Amish participants has not been reported in the research literature as of this writing, and therefore the merits of each are difficult to categorize. However, in terms of apparent clinical efficacy and respect for the religious beliefs, segregated programs appear more appropriate.

Adolescent Substance Abuse

Adolescents in Rumspringa would initially appear less impacted by concerns about substance abuse and addictions. They seem to be youth who have left the Amish community and more fully integrate with "the world," even if only for a season. The reality is far different, however. These are youth who free themselves from the codified expectations of their communities in a transition phase. The length of that phase depends on the affiliation and their peer group. Many continue to use alcohol and "run around" well past the time they join the church, often stopping all such behaviors only as they become seriously romantically involved and marry.

Nevertheless, even before church membership, they remain deeply integrated in the community. Their friends, peer group, and interests remain Amish. The vast majority continue to live at home, worrying their parents with their behaviors. When they "party," it is with Amish peers. When they "dress English," they mimic the English dress code prescribed by their Amish peers. And when the day is done, all that they have seen, experienced, and heard, including alcohol and drug classes that bombard them from outside the community, are ultimately discarded as temporary and "of the world." Because of this dilemma, several concerned professionals created the Amish Youth Vision Project, initially a task force and now a nonprofit corporation that addresses alcohol and drug issues among Amish youth.[9] The remainder of this chapter focuses on this model intervention program.

The Vision Project Emerges

Initial Steps

In May 2002 *The Devil's Playground,* a pseudo-documentary depicting Amish adolescence, premiered.[10] Primarily filmed on location in the Elkhart–LaGrange, Indiana area, the program focused on rampant, un-

controlled alcohol and drug use among a few Amish adolescents, portraying these behaviors as common during this phase.

In September 2002, the town manager of Shipshewana, a pivotal community in the area, called a meeting of local Amish parents and leadership to discuss concerns raised by the film. All agreed that the views presented were an exaggeration and distortion of the scope of the problem, but they also agreed on the need to address the problem.

From that initial meeting, the Amish Youth Vision Project took shape. The Project proposed to lower alcohol and drug use risk behaviors among Amish youth and strengthen systems of family support by creating model intervention programs for these risk behaviors. The first program considered was an alcohol and drug education intervention. In conceptualizing the program, multicultural aspects of an intervention needed to be addressed, in particular the community's traditional distrust of counseling and substance abuse services. Since the proposed program would parallel existing drug and alcohol education groups, a first step was to canvass the community regarding perceptions of current models.

Consultation

Focus groups were solicited from the surrounding community. Groups represented segments of the local population (Amish parents, clergy, and youth, and probation and law enforcement officers). Juvenile justice and law enforcement personnel wanted assurances that a program would include qualified service providers and effective education about the effects and dangers of alcohol and drug use and abuse. These concerns were incorporated throughout program development and design, including monitoring for effectiveness.

Amish leadership and parents were clear at the time and have been clear since. Alcohol and drug education should be presented in the home by parents. It does not fall within the purview of others to share. That said, this is a permeable boundary. Students in public schools are generally allowed to participate in prevention programs for substance abuse, and the Vision Project received approval for its work with adolescents who had been arrested and were facing an education program as part of their sentence or probation. Youth consumers (under 21) were equally willing to participate in an all-Amish education program.

The Amish patterns of use and abuse differ dramatically from those

of the English. In the general population the popularly named "gateway drugs"—alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana—are normally first consumed in early adolescence. If not using these substances themselves, most adolescents know of peers who are. Whether they serve as a "gateway" to other drugs is controversial, but there is agreement that they are the first drugs of choice in the typical pattern of substance experimentation and use.

The pattern differs for Amish youth. Some may have experimented with drinking shortly before their sixteenth birthday, but at that watershed or soon thereafter, if they are going to begin, they will begin drinking heavily. For them, "sixteen" corresponds to our "twenty-one." However, virtually the only substance they will initially experience is alcohol. A few will experiment with marijuana and use tobacco as time passes, but only a small minority move to other drugs. For many, as is true with late adolescents and early adults in mainstream America, binge drinking is the norm. Again, it is difficult to determine numbers who drink regularly rather than bingeing on weekends at parties. However, bingeing behavior appears to predominate.

These youth, with such a different trajectory into substance use, were observed to be at a loss sharing alcohol and drug classes with their English peers. Not only was their experience dramatically different, but they expressed confusion over the breadth and depth of personal disclosure expected of them in classes or groups. They were raised with an understanding that "the world" should be kept at a distance. They also complained of the lack of cultural awareness of others in the group. Often they were met with disbelief when they stated that they had never engaged in drug use other than alcohol or occasional marijuana or when they described a culture of alcohol use that is still largely unknown among the English (e.g., beginning their substance use at age 16). They were then burdened with educating other group members or even leaders about their culture when they already felt exposed and alone.

English group participants often competed for time and attention. Amish participants emerged from a culture in which such competition reflected a lack of humility and would have been abhorred. English group members came from a culture where public confession occurs without an expectation for change or condemnation. In contrast, Amish traditions of confession carry an expectation for immediate repentance. The experience of unburdening guilt or shame without the intention of subsequent penance was foreign for Amish participants.

Amish parents complained about the content of such classes, since the language of participants and leaders was often laced with obscenity or profanity.[11] The topic of religion, when discussed in either the tolerant humanist language of counseling or the evangelical personal style of some counselors, was offensive. This left recovery language about "higher powers" confusing or irrelevant. Amish youth, unwilling to compete with others in a group for attention or instructor time, became lost in the group process. In addition, although these youth appeared to speak fluent English, a Dutch dialect is most familiar in the home and is the language of choice for intimate or emotionally tinged conversations. The sometimes rapid-fire, obscenity- and idiom-laced language of groups often left them unsure of what was being said. Furthermore, verbal interaction is closely paired with nonverbal or intuitive expression in their high-context culture, with much either unstated or implied. Thus, language barriers resulted in misunderstandings or communication gaffes between these youth and their English leaders or peers. As a result, court and law enforcement personnel expressed concern that Amish youth did not seem to achieve maximum benefit from inclusion in integrated substance abuse programs.

Collaboration

Focus groups made it readily apparent that the Amish community, no less than the general culture, maintains a wide-ranging tolerance for adolescent alcohol use (although other drug use was universally forbidden). For this reason, the alcohol and drug classes utilized a harm-reduction model in discussing the impact of alcohol, and to a lesser extent other drugs, emphasizing choices and responsibility as well as the physiological and legal consequences of consumption of these substances.[12] The program still predicated abstinence from all alcohol and drugs as the most responsible choice for any minor.

Amish social circles intertwine and overlap, in contrast to English culture, where social networks can be more distinctly separated. For the mainstream, counseling is a process that is distinct from the client's social environment, and dual relationships are avoided or approached with caution (both clinically and ethically). This separation is not only unnatural for these youth but potentially threatening to the larger community. To address this unique style, the first component of alcohol and drug classes was one of segregation. Classes would be held for Amish youth only.

In addition to segregating the groups on the basis of cultural background, it was decided that young adults (those already baptized into the church) would serve as co-leaders or facilitators with English counselors. Again, this acknowledged and built on the intertwining and overlapping social circles in the community. Co-leaders were recruited from the local area, meaning they shared the same friends, acquaintances, churches and often extended family as group members. For English clients, attendance at a group where one might be confronted with friends or relatives as leaders could be uncomfortable. In contrast, these youth are often more at ease knowing that the environment they enter is similar to other social circles they encounter. Parents report that they are pleased to see familiar faces and express greater comfort knowing their children are in classes with community mentors than if the groups were led and attended primarily by English. These co-leaders also function in an essential facilitator role for the English leaders, providing feedback on group process and leadership style, and identifying subtle cues that would otherwise be missed.

The inclusion of Amish co-leaders has been the most efficacious aspect of these drug and alcohol classes. Amish youth walk into the English world with the expectation that these experiences, much like Rumspringa itself, are temporary. They intend to walk away at some future point, join the church, and separate from the world that they have briefly embraced. Therefore, any experience in an English context has the potential to be ignored or denied long-term. By merging the classes with their Amish life via the presence of a co-leader from the community, there is less opportunity for this compartmentalization. Insights gained and relationships formed are more likely to be assimilated as part of their ongoing genuine self rather than a temporary and superficial Rumspringa identity. This also allows for group rather than individual identity development and group consensus on the importance of topics discussed and information shared. Co-facilitators have an essential role in this process. Youth experience positive regard and challenges to make positive change without the internal conflict normally caused by experiencing these motivations from English counselors. Parents are more open because these experiences are not perceived as a temptation drawing youth away but further develop their involvement within the community.

Several aspects of the basic design that follows are familiar to any mental health or addiction professional running groups. Others are unique to

work with a sequestered people. This outline briefly describes the steps and process of the structured psycho-educational program.

As noted above, the groups are segregated by culture, allowing participation by Amish youth (normally) ages 16–20. Referrals are accepted exclusively from attorneys or county probation departments, and all group members are, or soon will be, court-ordered to receive drug and alcohol education. Groups are segregated according to gender. This mirrors the segregation that exists in Amish schools and churches, and provides for similar backgrounds and shared experiences as a starting point for the youth. It also provides an environment for discussion and a group process that allows greater comfort with confrontation and gentle conflict.

Family investment is essential. While young people are accorded greater freedom during Rumspringa, almost all continue to live at home. Those who do not generally maintain close ties to their families. Acknowledgement of the depth of family involvement is a strength that is essential to success in the group process.

To involve family, a letter is sent to the home of each referred client introducing the project and inviting parents to attend the first and last session. The letter also offers a contact telephone number for questions.[13] Sessions are held for two hours weekly for eight weeks. Each set of sessions is closed, with the same group of youth matriculating through each eight-week program. Often parents call before the group to clarify information. At times, these calls seem to be a means of communicating with the English counselor and developing a first impression. Occasionally, parents apologize for being unavailable and ask if they can schedule another meeting with the counselor and co-leader. Every effort is made to honor these requests. (Parent concerns have diminished over the years as the program has established itself and become known within the community.)

The first session includes an explanation of the rules for participation, client rights, and limitations to confidentiality. These concepts are often unfamiliar to the Amish, who are also suspicious of the need for mental health "contracts." For these reasons this information is provided with time for questions and answers. The class then follows the schedule of a typical group, with a group activity, lecture concerning alcohol or drug use, and breaks for small-group activities. Parents and youth are separated for a portion of the time to facilitate discussion.

At the end of each class, youth are presented with a homework assignment. The assignment consists of one or two simple but provocative

questions generated from the classwork. Youth are directed to ask them of someone they identify as a confidante, mentor, or trusted friend. They then write their answers and return them to class the next week. By allowing the participants to select the person they wish to ask, counselors are able to help the youth identify supports within the community. Interestingly, most youth choose to ask a parent (usually their mother). This also provides parents with an awareness of the topics discussed in class and a connection to the group process, in part returning alcohol and drug education to the home as the Amish believe it should be. Each week begins with a review of the homework, including the person chosen to ask, the reason for the choice, and the topic discussed. Each class then moves to a didactic session on alcohol or a specific drug, followed by a group discussion geared to the needs of that particular class, usually focusing on social supports, identity issues, moral or emotional struggles, or problem-solving and decision-making skills.

The Model in Practice

Over time, the single most essential component of the program's success has been the use of Amish co-leaders. Effective co-leaders demonstrate an ability to act in three separate but equally important roles in the classes: validation, translation, and facilitation.

Validation

Amish youth have learned that the English are "of the world." This and a lack of earned respect on the part of English counselors mean that they are less "real." Since the only valued reality is the heavenly realm or their own community rather than the world, the English are often considered "artificial" or "fake." In a cultural context, this concept protects the Amish from corruption by English ideas and practices. In group settings this is a significant barrier to connection, empathy, and process. Amish co-leaders thus "validate" ideas and information as acceptable. Through paraphrasing, questioning, and repetition of ideas, they give a voice to concepts that are then accepted by the youth.

In contrast, many ideas that surface in English drug and alcohol classes are threatening to the group identity and shared responsibility that is essential to the perpetuation of their culture and family (e.g., individual

responsibility and choice, assurance of salvation, individuation and acculturation). This perceived (and sometimes real) threat is one reason many resist substance abuse services. It is because of this threat, and the necessity for parental acceptance and participation, that the group must have an Amish identity.

Translation

As translators, co-leaders assist youth with difficult terms and ideas, often modeling classroom behavior such as asking questions or challenging concepts and assumptions. They will also ask for definitions of difficult or new words that they are aware will be foreign to the participants. They can answer questions the English leader may have about the relevance of certain ideas to the youth, or the universality of these ideas.

Also in the role of translator, co-leaders provide assistance in monitoring the room's mood and participants' attention to and understanding of information. Body language and communication differs significantly and can easily be misinterpreted even by those familiar with Amish people. Silence may signal a lack of comprehension, rejection of ideas, boredom, confusion, anger, or, more positively, contemplation. It becomes difficult for an English professional to differentiate between these reactions. However, co-leaders intuitively read these different moods and assist the counselor, either by requesting more information or by verbally expressing the group's mood. Sometimes this is as simple as a comment such as "That's just a lot to think about" as an explanation for the silence.

Facilitation

The expectation for humility means avoiding undue attention. As a result, it can be difficult to participate meaningfully in a group process. English cultural expectations of challenges to authority, self-disclosure, and expression of feeling, while generally seen as essential to group process (in particular to the development of group cohesiveness, shared purpose, and instillation of hope), are cultural anathema for these youth. The co-leader takes on the role of "buffer" by diverting attention from the individual when they share information or speak.

Amish group process is characterized by a drive toward consensus, shared beliefs and values, and harmony. Amish co-leaders, by accepting

ideas from the youth, repeating them and agreeing, serve two purposes. First, they remove the onus of attention from the youth who has spoken, preserving personal humility and saving the youth from embarrassment. Second, they place the focus of the group on the statement, often taking personal ownership of the idea and expressing a sense of universality, thereby providing a framework for group consensus regarding the concept or expression of feeling. After this process is "owned" by the co-leader, other group members often express agreement softly to one another or nod assent, taking quiet but meaningful part in the development of group ideas and values. This transaction, from English counselor through co-leader to youth, then back to English counselor is the essence of the group process and occurs repeatedly throughout each group session. It creates a consensus facilitated by the co-leader.

This model appears to be a viable means of addressing attitudes and behaviors among Amish youth. An analysis of 300 youth completing the program found positive changes in attitudes toward the use of alcohol and tobacco and an increased knowledge base about the effects of substance use and abuse.[14]

Other Alternatives

Parents in the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, area faced a similar problem with underage alcohol use. As is true in larger communities, their Rumspringa-age youth had separated into various "gangs." These are large and loose conglomerates of affiliated youth who join together for a weekend gatherings, singings, and parties that can involve drinking. In response, a number of parents have taken the role of "sponsors" with various groups, serving in a supervisory role for youth activities. This effort at sponsorship actually predates the 1998 drug arrests so prominently displayed in the national news.[15] Parents met regularly to codify expectations for gatherings and discuss concerns, and for a time disseminated a newsletter similar to other Amish publications in its combination of morality tales and news. To date, approximately 50 percent of the youth groups in the Lancaster area have parental sponsorship, and anecdotal data suggests that this has reduced underage alcohol consumption.

There are certainly no simple or easy interventions for addressing alcohol and drug use at any age. Yet addictions counselors need to be sen-

sitive to the emphasis on spirituality that often accompanies addictions treatment. The Amish are extremely reluctant to directly confront offensive behaviors, particularly those that occur in novel or court-ordered environments. Therefore, they may quietly tolerate religious views that run counter to their own practices and beliefs. Ideally, programs are designed specifically for them or at a minimum incorporate their ideas and preferences. Such programs are essential for respectful and efficacious treatment.

CHAPTER 11

Law Enforcement and the Judiciary

Seeing this forlorn teenager in a gray coverall furnished by the detention center was startling. I had anticipated the "deer in the headlights" look with which he greeted me, but the change from the plain clothing he continued to wear even during his adolescent rebellion was a stark contrast. His sole concession to Rumspringa, an act of defiance that greatly disturbed his conservative father, was the purchase of running shoes with a white stripe rather than a solid black design. The alcohol-fueled vandalism that led to his incarceration was also out of character, an attempt to "run" with a wilder group than his normal peers.

As we sat on a narrow bench in a holding cell, his fear was palpable. He had been given a two-week sentence and had now served five days. A fellow mental health professional at the center monitored him closely, but for one sheltered by attending an Amish school and raised deep within the community, this was a traumatic experience.

"So how goes it?" I asked, unable to predict even the direction of his answer. Looking cautiously to his left and back to the right as if others might have crept into the tiny windowless room without our knowledge, he leaned closer and whispered in my ear: "We take showers together."

"And how do you handle that?" I asked in reply, stalling for time, trying to gauge the significance and symbolism of this initial complaint.

"I look straight in front of me," he said, and modeling the behavior, he stared woodenly at the beige cinderblock ahead.

Other concerns included the television in the dayroom, which he assiduously avoided watching, and the language of his fellow detainees

and the staff, all of whom used profanity, which he tried to avoid hearing. Still, in his opinion the greatest worldly sin remained the casual manner in which his peers engaged in nudity at shower time. It was a powerful reminder of the differences in mindset that serve as a foundation for Amish beliefs even when youth engage in behaviors that are illegal or appear in tune with "normal" adolescent rebellion.

Because the Amish largely continue a tradition of law-abiding behavior and within-group resolution of problematic issues, the primary interface between the judicial system and their group occurs when adolescents are in Rumspringa. Still, with more permeable boundaries has come more interaction between the criminal justice system and adults as well. Thus it is important to consider both adolescent and adult responses to civil and criminal responsibility in "the second kingdom" as they consider earthly governmental authority.

The Amish View of Law Enforcement

Mainstream American views on law enforcement come from a variety of sources. A primary reference point is the media, as both fictionalized and news accounts mold and shape perceptions of police behavior and guide the character of policing in the twenty-first century.[1] The Amish are not immune to such perceptions. Rather, they are subject to a "trickle down" effect in which the attitudes of the surrounding culture influence them in a slower and more insidious way. However, any effect is buffered by their own views of authority that perceive police, as an armed agent of the state, in a different context than the majority of Americans do.

At a fundamental level, their allegiance belongs to God. The *Martyr's Mirror,* an extensive history of Anabaptist persecution found in virtually every Amish home, is a reminder of the ultimate sacrifice made by their ancestors in the quest for religious liberty.[2] Time and time again, these defenders of the faith were burned at the stake or otherwise persecuted. Their stories serve as a reminder of the godless character of state authority and the need to remain unwavering in the face of persecution when answering the higher call. At a theological level three sets of verses, all taken from the Gospels, further clarify their position.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "Judge not, that ye be not

judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:1–2). The Amish interpret the injunction against "judging" lightly not merely as a warning against an attitude or opinion. Rather, they include more formal decisions about right and wrong. (This also motivates their reluctance to serve on juries or to testify in court, both situations in which they are called to pass judgment on the actions of others.) The doctrine of forgiveness of sin is extremely important, and the rehabilitation and punishment model of the judicial system, particularly with its slow cadence and time-consuming process, is anathema to their beliefs.

They may also cite Jesus's response to the woman caught in adultery and brought to him. In the classic story, rather than respond he bent and wrote on the ground until her accusers, one by one, faded away. "When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:10–11). In Amish theology, this approach is analogous to confession, church discipline, and the agreement of all concerned that the sin is now forgotten. This contrasts with a protracted legal process with its hearings, trial, incarceration, and probationary and/or parole periods that often accompany it. Amish people remain much more comfortable referring matters to church discipline, which they understand in its fullness and over which they retain control.

Even if they were to fully comprehend the legal system and it operated with clockwork efficiency, it is still an arm of the "second kingdom." They cite the instance in which the learned cultural leaders of Jesus's day attempted to trap him by asking whether they should pay taxes to Rome. The famous reply: "Bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:15–17). For the Amish, there is a clearly delineated line between that which is to be handled by God and his kingdom as it is represented on earth, and that which is to be handled by earthly rulers God allows to do his will.

There is further informal exegesis, sharpened, refined, and adjusted over the years that they use to support their views. Nevertheless, these critical passages demonstrate the justification of their separation from the

state. They provide the backdrop for interactions that occur with law enforcement and the judiciary. They also explain the reticence to engage too fully in interaction with either.

Law Enforcement and Adolescents

Adolescents entering Rumspringa pose a particular difficulty for law enforcement. This is, by definition, a period of disdain for the authority of even the "first kingdom" and a time to experience life on the "devil's playground." This means that youth will disregard many of the rules and restrictions imposed by family, church, and community that previously governed their behavior, while simultaneously viewing the rules of the world they enter as relatively inconsequential in their lives. As has previously been discussed, these youth will fall on a continuum. Some will act out in only the mildest fashion before returning to the church, while others will indulge themselves in hedonistic excess as they explore their ultimate identity.[3] Still, the intensity, focus, and pressures with which they live at this time derive not from the expectations of the larger society. They arise from within their collective culture.

Yet that pressure remains in delicate balance. Rarely do parents want the Rumspringa offspring to leave home, and rarely do the offspring themselves wish to leave. Simmering anger may be expressed in passive-aggressive ways, but direct acting out against the family is minimal. (One young man did choose to leave home at age eighteen. After returning to be baptized into the church, he recalled of his departure, "My mom held the screen door for me and cried.") The most direct expressions of anger often target law enforcement by challenging, "baiting," or otherwise defying their authority. For a collective culture in which the individual relies heavily on peers for guidance, group behavior improves or worsens accordingly.

The group dynamics of adolescent drug and alcohol use vary across communities, depending on the size and local traditions of the settlement. In some areas, many adolescents consume beer and a few use marijuana. In others, liquor is the nectar of the gods, with use extending more prominently into adulthood and alcohol abuse more prevalent among adult members. Large parties, at times involving several hundred youth, are more common in the larger areas in the warmer months, often drawing participants from multiple states. Smaller communities see smaller parties,

although in both cases underage use of alcohol and illicit drugs (primarily marijuana) is problematic.

There is often a unique informality to the interactions between law enforcement and these minor offenders, which is triggered by a number of factors. Unfortunately, this creates a system that is better understood by the officers than by the offenders and leaves a lasting impression into adulthood. In part this occurs due to the geographic locale of communities. Because they are in rural areas, Amish residents often know the local law enforcement officers and in turn may be well known by them. They may be neighbors, if not friends. The attitudes of rural America prevail, and "policing" takes on the peculiarities endemic to small towns. Such interactions are not problematic until large groups of Amish youth engage in illicit behavior such as underage drinking. At that point the local police, who have functioned in a largely informal role, are suddenly forced to revert to a much more formal and authoritarian stance. The Amish neither anticipate nor respect this change of demeanor.

Even with the need for a dominating presence, there are significant differences in management and policing policies of law enforcement. Amish youth are less frequently detained than English youth. Their crimes tend to be status offenses involving the use of alcohol. As a result, they are unlikely to be remanded to detention. Too often as well, parents are not easily contacted by phone to alert them of the arrest and pending transport of their child. It is simply more expedient and cost-efficient to bring an offender home when the officer is reasonably certain of compliance with appearances for court hearings and subsequent consequences.

Second, and again because crimes tend to involve underage possession or consumption of alcohol and other status offenses, many officers in the field use their discretion and do not charge or arrest these youth. The only action may be to seize any alcohol in their possession. Officers may also monitor parties in marked cars. Youth attending are aware that the police on the perimeter choose not to enter private property or disrupt the party unless partygoers attempt to leave while intoxicated and are driving a vehicle or buggy.

Third, Amish youth have little understanding of their civil liberties and rights under the law, a fact officers can use to their advantage. The Amish in one area have coined a phrase to refer to common traffic stops: "Driving While Amish." Officers routinely violate the need for probable cause to stop these youth, acknowledging that they are able to recognize

a car filled with Youngie. The officers know that there will be no legal repercussions, since they are unaware of their rights. Such stops routinely ask about alcohol, which the youth will generally admit is present, and they will consent to a search of the vehicle. This laissez-faire approach to enforcement insulates these youth from the more serious consequences of illegal behavior. However, it also creates an unintended pattern of long-term consequences.

For example, a cyclical pattern emerges as law enforcement alters its policies to contain underage drinking in large communities. As is true with many "victimless crimes," attitudes in the larger non-Amish population move between tolerance and frustration, and this cycle is reflected in the response of community policing. For a time, local police or county sheriff's departments may take a "hands off" approach to large field parties, provided revelers remain contained. Only those who exit the site of the party and are clearly intoxicated are charged. This tolerance gives way to a period of increased enforcement in response to expressed concerns from English neighbors or the citizens of the larger community. Large parties are then raided with multiple arrests. Such raids, if consistently applied, succeed in disbanding the large parties but not in reducing illicit alcohol use. These youth resort to a practice known in Indiana as "cruising gravel" or "cruising dirt," referring to small groups in vehicles driving the back roads and drinking as they travel. During these periods, alcohol-related accidents and deaths increase. Officers increase their vigilance in stopping Rumspringa-age drivers ("Driving While Amish"), and over time, field parties reemerge in response to the increased risk of being apprehended on the road. Law enforcement is again left with the quandary of whether to shut them down, risking "rolling" parties, or tolerate the eventual irate complaints of the larger population, which perceives favoritism toward these youth who are allowed to "party" without consequences.

A disdainful attitude toward authority elicits acting out in other ways as well. Incidents recounted with glee by Rumspringa youth include rocking a police car in an attempt to roll it (unsuccessfully) while the officers were making arrests at a party, and pouring beer onto an officer from a tree.[4] When confronted with the seriousness of their actions, these youth often appear genuinely oblivious to the risks of physical danger and arrest. In their minds, they are "having fun" at the expense of the police. This is consistent with their lack of understanding of their civil rights, for they

also fail to grasp their civil responsibilities. Both fall under the rubric of the "second kingdom," a temporary sojourn in their lives.

Law enforcement itself contributes to the disdain for authority. Different police and sheriff's departments in adjoining geographic locales overlap responsibility for youth from the same community. If these departments use different approaches or manifest different degrees of tolerance toward adolescent behavior, their inconsistencies further confuse youths' understanding of illegal or unacceptable versus acceptable behavior. For example, if one locale overlooks Amish underage drinking while another arrests, only to reverse these policies in a few months, the community is left with an understanding that the statutes are flexible and easily manipulated. During the summer months in Indiana, youth will often discuss which departments are engaging in which forms of policing at that time in order to determine the best location to hold large parties or "cruise dirt."

As Amish youth mature, they understand that they have been treated with greater flexibility and privilege than their English peers when violating the law, particularly where alcohol is involved. This merely confirms the implicit teaching that the Amish church is the highest authority and that state or secular authorities are a distant second, easily disdained. For example, in an effort to quell a large party, officers contacted a local bishop and enlisted his aid in dispersing the youth present. The officers considered themselves having "teamed" with the local leadership to address the issue. However, they failed to realize that the bishop was circulating among the partygoers, speaking in dialect and sharing in ridiculing the police. He supported a time on the "devil's playground" as a necessary aspect of Rumspringa and was in sympathy with the youth—not with the officers who had called him.

Police can also find themselves "winning the battle and losing the war." More than one incident has occurred in Indiana in which officers have responded to reports of underage drinking at an Amish wedding. Such alcohol use is often tolerated if not supported, as Rumspringa-age youth gather in the late afternoon or evening to surreptitiously imbibe. However, the presence of English authority at a wedding event is seen as an egregious violation of a sacred moment in Amish life. The bishop referred to above, who ridiculed rather than supported the officers who called him, had experienced just such a "raid" the summer before at his daughter's wedding.

Establishing ongoing relationships with adolescents, their parents, and the clergy becomes the best enforcement tool. It allows an understanding of the community and the youth and creates a dynamic that is essential within Amish culture in order to elicit cooperation. As with any interaction with this group, their respect is not for "the badge" or a department. Their respect is for the individual. Officers are in the best position to relate effectively with those who know them and are known to them. Ironically, it is the local police in small towns who have the greatest struggle with a duality of roles who are also most likely to have the greatest long-term success in working with the Amish because of their familiarity.

The LaGrange County Indiana Sheriff's Department has long operated a Bishop's Council to encourage a team approach with the Amish in that community. The council serves as a liaison for concerns that the community may express as well as concerns on the part of the sheriff and deputies. The presence of these bishops serves as a conduit in both directions and improves an understanding of policing efforts and of the Amish. The council has also taken an active role in alcohol and drug education, including an educational series that addressed these issues for all fourteen- and fifteen-year-old Youngie in the county.

Law Enforcement and Adults

Law enforcement may become involved in high-profile cases with the Amish, as recent issues with selling raw milk[5] and beard-cutting[6] demonstrate. However, criminal cases more commonly revolve around theft or assault, usually perpetrated from outside the community, if the victims decide to report. It is rare for the Amish to report on their own. In a notable situation in Indiana, an Amish couple was robbed at gunpoint by a young man they recognized as the unbaptized son of a couple from a neighboring church. They chose not to report the robbery to the police, although they did share with the man's parents that it had occurred. The Amish can also be the victims of hate crimes, although again they frequently fail to report such acts due to their emphasis on forgiveness.[7]

More common are two business issues that arise in the Amish community. The Amish are normally hard-working entrepreneurs who maintain an uncanny business savvy.[8] Although some invest in "pyramid schemes" that drain their resources, these do not normally involve criminal mis-

representation or mismanagement. Nevertheless, such malfeasance does occur. Despite the media reports of the conviction of the "Amish Bernie Madoff,"[9] serious misrepresentation is usually handled within the church. In an Indiana case, a young builder repaid investors in a pyramid scheme by "flipping" houses. As the profits dwindled, he used funds from new investors to pay older investors, and inevitably the entire pyramid collapsed, leaving him almost $1.5 million in debt. Since all the investors were Amish, his church decided to assume responsibility for repayment rather than press for criminal charges or even civil litigation.

The other relatively common practice that brings the Amish into contact with enforcement officials is that of raising dogs for sale. As of 2012, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture listed 339 licensed kennels in Lancaster County on its website. Although it does not reference licensees by background, a plurality bear Amish family names. Despite the licensing effort, stories continue to proliferate about inadequate care in Amish "puppy mills" and the need for animal control officers and law enforcement to address these concerns. The Amish were alleged to fail to meet adequate standards of care and breeding, thus passing disease and genetic defects to dogs which were then purchased by unwary consumers. The issue has received less publicity since the early 1990s but still occasionally emerges as a concern in various communities.[10]

The Judiciary

Law enforcement may have initial involvement in issues related to zoning, taxes, vehicles, building ordinances, or similar conflicts that arise, and at least some of these disputes fall to the judiciary.[11] However those that advance are frequently mediated by the National Amish Steering Committee or otherwise managed through hierarchical channels and therefore fall beyond the focus of this chapter. Rather, the criminal defendant is the concern here.

The court has no responsibility to protect an intellectually capable, fully functioning adult from himself. (The masculine gender is used because the preponderance of interactions will be with males.) If the accused indicates that he understands his Miranda rights, waives them, refuses to obtain legal counsel, and confesses to any and all details of a crime, he is free to do so. Likewise, if a prosecutor chooses to warn the bishops of a

community that confessions of child sexual abuse that go unreported will be prosecuted (as has occurred in several jurisdictions) the person holding office is exercising a legal mandate.

If the court sees its purpose solely as the administration of legal proceedings for defendants who find their way into its presence without regard for broader consequences, then the judiciary performs its task. However, because the Amish are a collective society, the judiciary cannot pull one thread in this interwoven fabric without disturbing every other thread in the pattern. Sentencing a single defendant for a crime without representation, or threatening consequences of violating the state's laws against a group of bishops creates a ripple effect through the entire community. In so doing, the court becomes an engine of social change, whether intended or not.

The Amish take pride in those of their number who have been martyred for the faith. However, they are by no means fools. Most martyrs did not march proudly forward, begging to die. They hid, attempting to live another day. Likewise, those in the community who run afoul of the law may confess fully and freely within the church, but they have no intention of voluntarily confessing to the state until faced with what they perceive as an ultimatum, nor do those to whom they have confessed. Instead, harsh measures and the intrusion of the "second kingdom" into the first merely eliminate reports of illegal behavior. Whether it is youth who choose to drink or these same youth as adults who now choose to hide their sins even from the church, they quickly learn to avoid entanglements with the law.

The question is simple to ask but complex to answer: Does punishment of the one outweigh the negative consequences to the many? For example, is the prosecution of one sex offender, saving the community from his presence for several years and mandating treatment, worth the sexual abuse that could then be perpetrated on an ongoing basis, with minimal restraint, by other sex offenders because the community refuses to report abuse? The legal system is designed to deter behavior through punishment and/or rehabilitation. It is not designed or intended to serve as a catalyst to alter the thinking and behavior of entire cultures based on single decisions. And yet that is exactly the role it plays.

A well-liked, well-respected Amish minister was charged with fondling a minor female. Because he was also a schoolteacher, the charge was considered particularly heinous. He immediately made a

confession in church, was placed under a six-week ban, and, following his appropriate repentance, was restored to full status in the community. He also waived his rights and confessed to the investigating detective when the abuse was discovered, and at a sentencing hearing, anticipated incarceration within a few days.

The hearing was well-attended by members of his community who supported him. The prosecutor took a firm stance because of his status. The judge verbally excoriated him on the stand and chose to begin his incarceration immediately, a shock to both the defendant and his family. His daughter was to be married in two days, and he had anticipated attending her wedding, a request that was denied. The assembled supporters were treated to the sight of their minister, stunned and in tears, led out of the courtroom in handcuffs to begin his sentence. The impact of an immediate incarceration was intended to make a profound statement as to the gravity of the charges. Although the incident was fondling and appeared to have occurred only once, the judge felt the perpetrator's status warranted the severity of the punishment.

The court punished an offender in a highly dramatic manner. It made an example of a clergyman and schoolteacher who ignored his status in the community in committing his crime. Unfortunately, by enacting this high drama, the judicial players failed to consider the ripple effect. The high-profile sentencing created a martyr. For the Amish, a popular and highly effective minister had been imprisoned by a heartless judge. Justice had already been meted by the church; his sin had been forgiven and forgotten. Tragically, the nature of his conviction also caused further blame to be placed on his victim, despite the minister's encouragement from jail that he was solely responsible. Many years after the incident, the rumor persists that an innocent man was incarcerated by a corrupt judicial system.

Such an allegation of innocence frequently appears after a conviction, whether Amish or not. The difference is the impact of the story. I have heard this "Amish legend" in several communities in Indiana and as far away as Pennsylvania. A form of urban legend, it feeds the belief in a corrupt judiciary and the need for justice to be handled within the church.

Frustration then mounts because the Amish appear reticent to punish offenders. Yet it is we who fail to understand the logic of their process. Again, the importance of relationships between the judiciary and the Amish becomes essential. The creation of diversion programs may be re-

pugnant to some. Many see sex offenders in particular as heinous criminals who deserve incarceration. And yet the legal system abounds with inequities based on the efficacy of attorneys, the availability and strength of evidence, and the willingness of prosecutors and defendants to plea. It is not a far stretch to protect victims with a diversion program for Amish offenders such as the model described in chapter 13.

Probation and Parole

Successful probation and parole officers working with either adolescent or adult Amish offenders expand their repertoire of skills beyond the normal range. It is difficult to have one's authority perceived as secondary, but that is the reality for work with this group. Simultaneously, one is not only working with a single client but setting the tone for work with future clients as well.

Officers need to remember the differences in their social network. I was once leading an alcohol and drug program for Amish youth, and I stopped afterward to watch a softball game at a nearby field. As I sat in the bleachers, one of the young men who had been in class walked over and began chatting.

I had no problem with the interaction since he was the one who had chosen to violate confidentiality. However, I noticed his friends repeatedly glancing our way. "I don't mind talking," I said, "but it seems like your buddies are interested in why you're over here with me." "Oh," he said, "They know I was court-ordered to attend classes, and I told them you're running them." Clearly, there was no concern on his part in sharing his legal status with his peer group. I later learned that he discussed both the classes and his probation meetings freely.

The Amish accept the idea of professional roles, but it is an alien concept in their lives and one that reinforces their distance from the world. If an officer merely intends to guide an offender through administrative expectations, assuring that all requirements are completed, no modifications in role are required. However, if there is an intention to create an impact at a personal level, changing attitudes about behavior, the professional barrier needs to be altered to allow the officer to be more "real" than would otherwise be the case. The vulnerability involved in doing this is initially foreign to professionals. The power and control that the role gives is essential to asserting the authority of the office. Yet a balance needs to

exist between minimizing this professional role and allowing the offender to truly trust and hear the information given.

One way to do this is to indicate a willingness to learn about their culture. Asking questions when there appear to be blocks to effective communication rather than assuming passive resistance as a struggle for control is a way to become more "real." Likewise, exploring the dynamics generated in their lives by the response of family, church, and community is a way of remaining genuine. Allowing time to assimilate information, gather thoughts, and respond in a slow and cadenced manner can be more effective than rushing information. Furthermore, Amish people will often fail to indicate that they do not understand or will not acknowledge confusion. Checking that information has been accurately understood and assimilated becomes essential.

Officers anticipate resistance. English offenders deny, minimize, lie, distort, and project responsibility and blame onto others, and they are often resentful of the demands on time and fees incurred. Amish people are similarly angry when the state intrudes into their lives, but the pattern differs. Frequently they will fail to actively contradict an authority even if they disagree, but theirs is not a passive, fawning agreement. It is a quiet disagreement that they hone in many areas of their life, a disagreement based on the fact that what is occurring with the officer is "of the world" and ultimately does not affect them. The more an officer can establish rapport and empathy, the more the work that is done can be integrated into the life of that individual, and into the life of that community.

The Changing Perception of the Amish and the Law

Early in this chapter I noted the "trickle down" effect of the attitudes of mainstream culture on the Amish. They have long been known for their pacifist stance in all areas, including reporting crimes, pressing charges, and engaging in lawsuits. Changes in this pacifist attitude are occurring, but as with so many changes, there is a "wait and see" approach. The admonition against judging has far-reaching consequences, including an unwillingness to engage in the judicial system, even an unwillingness to defend themselves when charged.

I was familiar with the Amish practice of waiving the right to an attorney and responding in a forthright manner to all questions placed

by an investigating officer. The case in which I was involved had become high profile, featured by the news media, and a source of outrage for many, due to the number of sexual abuse victims this man acknowledged. Of concern at the moment was his bishop's contention that he was to face sentencing without an attorney. To obtain legal representation would fly in the face of trusting God, participate in a legal system that runs counter to Amish values, and—perhaps the greatest concern—waste money, since he had confessed, and there was no plausible defense for his actions.

Two factors gave me a sense of urgency in suggesting that he needed an attorney. First, if he received the minimum consecutive sentences on a portion of the charges, he could still be imprisoned for life. Second, even court officers were sending word to me indirectly that they wanted him to be represented.

The decision-making process on the part of the clergy was (for me) agonizingly slow. I am also sure that they felt harassed and rushed into making a decision without time to consider the consequences. Ultimately, we hammered out a compromise. If the court ordered the defendant to obtain legal counsel, the clergy would not stand in the way. The court was alerted to this agreement, made the order, and the defendant found an attorney who arranged a plea agreement for him.

And yet, not all interventions go smoothly. Several months after this arrest, another man in the same community faced similar charges. The clergy for the man I had counseled asked me to meet with his clergy as well. I did so, again describing my concerns in the judicial system when a defendant has no attorney present. They were courteous, thoughtful, and thanked me for my time. Their man represented himself and drew a suspended sentence with probation in the community.

I have since spoken with the original clergy, who believe that they made a mistake in allowing their member to be represented by legal counsel. My explanations of the differences in the two cases, the former a high-profile case with more numerous and more serious charges, were of little value. In their minds, they were led astray and violated their beliefs at my behest.

Could I have handled the situation differently and avoided tarnishing my reputation with these clergy? Perhaps. Hindsight, as the saying goes,

is 20/20. The divide between the legal system and the Amish is a morass that is deep, dangerous, and complicated. For them, it symbolizes the most dangerous elements of the second kingdom, and as such it is watched with distrust. These are attitudes of long standing that will change only slowly and only with tremendous effort on the part of those who work with the Amish.

CHAPTER 12

Healthcare Professions

She was a tiny three-year-old, and the pain of a fractured pelvis (as diagnostic imaging confirmed the preliminary diagnosis) amplified her fear in this foreign hospital environment. She did not yet speak English, and the family conversed in Dutch, her mother whispering comfort into her ear.

The stress was exacerbated by initial questions as to how the accident occurred. The family did not know, medical personnel were told. With eight children on the farm, she had wandered away. They heard her screams, and when her father ran to her aid, she was lying in a horse stall, presumably kicked. How long had she been unsupervised? Who knew? Her older brother was watching her, but he had not come to the hospital, remaining at home with the other children. Five minutes? Ten? A half hour? And (in the unspoken thoughts of the family), what did that matter now?

She needed care beyond the services available at this satellite facility and would be transported approximately fifty miles by ambulance. The family was reluctant to authorize the trip. Could they take her themselves? Their driver, who had brought them to the hospital, was willing to make the run. No, they were told emphatically, she needs special care en route. Then can a parent ride with her? Again an exchange of glances, and a nurse dismissed the family with the comment "That's not up to us." They were not told—could not be told—that Child Protective Services had been called.

The trauma occurred in early evening, and the child was soon transported alone, her parents traveling in tandem with their driver. Orthopedic surgery was scheduled for the next morning. As the family

awaited the outcome, an investigator, contacted the night before, interviewed them regarding possible child neglect, a charge that was later dismissed. However, the incident was widely reported in the community, including the "greed" of the hospital in insisting on an ambulance when surgery would be delayed, the refusal to allow a parent/translator to ride with the child, and the indifference to understanding or respecting their culture that had resulted in an investigation.

Those reading this vignette who work with the Amish in health care settings are likely either (a) venting their frustration against the health care personnel, or (b) nodding in sympathy with the staff. It was chosen because these incidents often create a backlash, even within the health care setting, of conflicting opinions regarding appropriate handling. As with so many demands for cultural competence with the Amish, there is no "right" way to handle such incidents. Rather, it becomes a matter of understanding the reverberating consequences within the larger community in choosing how such issues are handled.

The large majority of interactions between the Amish and health care providers remain routine. As patients they are friendly, cooperative, and no more difficult in treatment management than others seeking help. However, when health care must run at optimum efficiency by providing triage and services in emergency care or when an Amish patient is fearful and in pain—indeed, at the very moments when cooperation between the health care team, the patient, and the family is essential—dueling cultures become most problematic.[1] Unfortunately, the fallout from such incidents does not remain confined to a single individual or family. A sufficient number of such incidents can broadly define a practice, a clinic, or a health care facility.

This chapter addresses the work of physicians (including psychiatrists), the full range of nursing professionals, pharmacists, chiropractors, dentists, emergency medical technicians, and other allied health professions beneath a single umbrella discussion. This can be done because the same fundamental problems affect all of them. The unique contribution of Amish culture and spirituality to their understanding of the treatment of the physical body, illness, and injury are germane to all health care professionals.

Amish Views of Disease

A health care provider can safely assume that an Amish patient maintains, from a secular perspective, a "fatalistic" view of diseases and disease process. From the patient's perspective, God is in control of the most minute details of life. Ultimate decisions about the quality of life and even the risk of death are beyond our control. However, that fatalistic view is neither consistent nor unyielding.

A woman in one community routinely completed breast exams and found a lump. She agreed to surgery without hesitation but declined the recommended follow-up chemotherapy and radiation. Her decision making was driven by a logical rationale in her mind and in the minds of those close to her. An immediate surgical procedure to remove a foreign body was appropriate and fell within the limits of what God would expect as reasonable self-care. Ongoing care came too close to a lack of faith in God's ability to provide as well as creating an unnecessary financial burden on her family and others.

The Amish are unlikely to engage in life-prolonging medical procedures if there is little hope of recovery. Still, in this area of "what ifs," one finds the greatest variability. Among some families and communities, health care providers find a willingness to engage in a full range of treatments and services to assure health. Among others, treatments and services will be limited or perhaps even declined as families prefer to provide their own home-based interventions.

There is no uniform attitude toward immunizations. Although some still resist the idea of vaccination, other groups routinely comply with state expectations.[2] An outbreak of rubella among the Ohio Amish in the early 1990s is an example of the spread of infectious diseases that can occur because of this reluctance to participate.[3] It is based in part on a belief in the fundamental need to trust in God, and in part on a concern that depending too heavily on preventive care is a reliance on worldly knowledge. As the Amish increasingly utilize parochial schools, the emphasis on vaccinations as a public health policy for school attendance skirts community expectations, potentially allowing those who are most resistive to avoid the issue.[4]

The Amish have long represented a relatively closed community, and despite their growing numbers, this trend remains. As would be expected in a limited gene pool, certain hereditary disorders, a risk for all persons,

occur more frequently. Historically, hemophilia has been common in Amish communities in parts of Ohio, while the Allen County, Indiana, Amish have reported a higher-than-expected prevalence of limb-girdle muscular dystrophy.[5] Research has also suggested a possible genetic link to Type II diabetes.[6] However, of the two predominant genetic issues commonly seen among Old Order groups, one occurs in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, while the other is more diffuse.

Maple Syrup Urine Disease (MSUD), so called because of the sweet smell of a patient's urine, is formally known as branched-chain ketoaciduria. Commonly detected in infants, it is normally seen in Old Order Mennonites and Amish originating in the Lancaster area. The body is unable to process amino acids, and as these toxins build, they can potentially damage the brain and other organs. Left untreated, it can lead to seizures, coma, and death. Treatment is normally dietary (restriction of amino acids) and can stabilize MSUD for prolonged periods.[7]

Bipolar Disorder is apparently due to a genetic predisposition, and has long been studied among the Amish.[8] However, symptoms can manifest in a culture-bound manner. Hypomanic and manic behaviors in particular may be muted compared to their presentation among the English and may include driving horses quickly without due consideration for their well-being, speaking without consideration for the thoughts of others, or acting impulsively without considering the consequences. In contrast, depression may be ignored or suppressed rather than acknowledged.

These are long-standing and relatively well-researched disease processes among the Amish but are not meant to be exhaustive. The Clinic for Special Children, in Strasburg, Pennsylvania, continues genetic research focused on both Plain Peoples and broadly applicable to many ethnic backgrounds.[9] Their work is groundbreaking and continues to reveal hereditary components to risk and illnesses among the Amish as well as other populations.

Expectations in the Role of Patient

The Amish often display an excellent mastery of the English language. However, their mastery may not extend to discussion of emotions or the medical aspects of disease. In addition, as a high-context culture, the detailed, exacting process of sharing information is at odds with the information-gathering style with which they are most accustomed. In times of

extreme stress (such as illness), they often revert to their primary Dutch dialect, at least in thought. When this is combined with a stoic presentation, a health care professional can erroneously assume that information is being readily absorbed and understood, when in fact the patient and/or family members glean only a portion of the data presented. It becomes important to present data in multiple ways and to ask that the patient and/or family repeat what has been provided. To avoid embarrassment, the health care worker can explain that this is a means of assuring that information was presented in a clear manner. It is also important to avoid idioms. (I once made the mistake of turning to an Amish friend and, referring to a meeting that was rapidly deteriorating, whispered the offhand comment, "Well, we're out of the frying pan and into the fire now." Several minutes later my companion looked at me with a puzzled expression and asked, "What frying pan?")

Health care workers also do well to remember the hierarchical nature of Amish culture. A wife may prefer that her husband answer questions, or a young adult may prefer that his father or even mother respond. If clergy are present, they may take an active role in decision making. Rather than reflect the question back to the patient, accepting the response of the designated spokesperson can generate less anxiety.

As noted when discussing immunizations, there may be less emphasis on preventive care. Orthodontic work is rarely used, and routine dental or physical examinations are comparatively minimal.[10] For this reason the Amish patient is more likely to visit a health care provider during an urgent or emergency situation rather than establish a relationship based on routine visits.

Expectations in the Role of a Hospitalized Patient

Once a patient is admitted to a hospital or is in residence at a health care facility, there are minimal but important culture-specific needs. In general, there are no dietary restrictions; however, food sharing is an important nurturing practice, serving as a support during times of stress. Furthermore, many Amish prefer traditional American cuisine and may be less comfortable with contemporary or exotic choices. Silent prayer is offered before and often after meals. Although a patient may forego the ritual in deference to English surroundings, the custom is an important one in the

community. Depending on the specific Amish affiliation, both prayers may be considered a requirement, but for many the prayer prior to the meal is the more essential rite.

A patient may be familiar with advance directives. However, without time to consider, reflect, and talk with family members and possibly with clergy, patients will choose the option perceived as most consistent with their beliefs. As a result, the default choice will often be to avoid heroic measures. (I was asked to transport an Amish bishop to the hospital to visit his wife, who had been taken there in an emergency. The items he took with him from his home included her living will.) As is the case with any major decision, they prefer time to consider the potential ramifications before arriving at a final choice. The Amish accept blood transfusions and organ transplants. They also give blood, and family members will normally donate if asked.

As their style of dress indicates, Amish people maintain a high level of modesty. Nevertheless, they usually remain open to opposite-gender health care workers. Women wear a hair covering at all times. This is normally a prayer bonnet, but in more casual circumstances they may substitute a scarf or shawl. A woman's covering should be removed only as an absolute necessity, and the reason explained beforehand to both the patient and any family present. (In the incident described above, one of the items the bishop's wife had explicitly requested was a white handkerchief. When we arrived at her room, she immediately used it as a head covering, her *kapp*, or more formal head covering, having been put away with her street clothes.)

Visitors are numerous. This show of support is both expected and consistent with the cohesion of the community. Because of the number of visitors, facilities may consider more chairs or extra room than is normally accorded a patient. Men will wear hats which they need to place aside during their visit. Providing hooks on the wall, a rack, or another place for storage is a subtle awareness of their needs. Parents normally stay with their children, and children or spouses may stay with older adults. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask visitors to leave the room during procedures or for a necessary period of time, such as rest or consultation with a health care professional. Often the visitors themselves attempt to be sensitive if they sense they are intruding. Flowers may appear, but cards are more likely. Writing, with a specific note to the patient, is a com-

mon demonstration of concern. An injury or illness may be reported in *The Budget*, the Amish newspaper originating in Sugar Creek, Ohio, if it is of sufficient severity or the person has significant social standing.

Physical touch beyond that needed for actual care may seem limited. The Amish show support by their presence rather than through gestures of physical affection, particularly in the company of others. Likewise, it remains important for health care professionals to respect these boundaries. Demonstrations of compassion from health care providers may need to stop short of physical attention, even gestures as minimal as patting a shoulder or hand. The Amish may seem flat or unemotional in their interactions with the English and even in their interactions with each other that the English observe. This is a means of maintaining "distance" in the presence of the world, an interactive style that has been honed from childhood. Greater emotional expression occurs when they are more sequestered.

The issue of care by non-Amish clerics is more individual. Some accept, and a few even welcome, the ministrations of other clergy, while others rely solely on their own ministers. The chaplain may also meet the patient's clergy as visitors but be unaware of their role since they are unlikely to introduce themselves as such. Prayers are not normally spoken by the Amish in the presence of English. However, it is acceptable to ask if a chaplain may pray aloud for them. Saying or reading the Lord's Prayer (the full prayer) or the 23rd Psalm is also appropriate. One can offer comfort by wishing a patient "patience during this difficult time."

Birth and Delivery

Contraception other than natural methods violates their beliefs, but the recent reduction in family size suggests that some form of family planning is used.[11] Amish women normally seek prenatal care but often use complementary and alternative medicines as well. Birth may occur in a hospital, birthing center, or the home.[12] Birthing centers created specifically for Amish women can be found in larger communities, providing a cost-effective alternative to hospitals and assuring nursing care during the delivery. If a first child is delivered without incident, mothers who have used a hospital often opt for a birthing center or the home for subsequent deliveries. Attending these may be a physician, master's-prepared mid-

wife, or lay midwife (Amish or English, certified/licensed, or practicing discreetly in the community). The husband is often present at the birth.

Children are highly valued, and consistent with a fatalistic view, a disability is seen as God's will. Indeed, children with disabilities are considered "special gifts" sent from God. The Amish normally accept medical care to save an infant in distress, although there are anecdotal reports of resistance to extensive medical intervention.[13] If a newborn dies or is physically challenged, health care workers can appropriately express concern for the loss or hardships ahead. God's will does not negate the pain in these situations, and grief is an anticipated response. Quiet concern and empathy are appreciated.

The End Stage of Life

The end stage of life is a period of preparation and anticipatory grief, as it is for anyone. As is true throughout the rest of their lives, there are rituals and expectations that guide this period. The Amish accept hospice care but prefer to die in the home. As death nears, a bishop anoints the person's head and sometimes the hands. This ritual is a symbolic forgiveness of sins, known and unknown. Although salvation is not assumed, since that would be *hochmut*, or pride, the *hope* of salvation is present at death as it has been throughout life. For those who die without benefit of baptism as a symbol of acceptance of Christ as their Savior, the specific situation dictates the intensity of that hope. For example, young children and those who are mentally challenged receive a strong hope of salvation. Adolescents who have not yet made a commitment to the church place their families in the clutches of greater fear.

In the hospital, nursing staff handle care of the body. Autopsies are considered invasive and disturbing, in part because they disrupt the customary rapid response to a death. Still the Amish will normally cooperate if this procedure is required and the necessity is understood. In the home, care of the deceased is the responsibility of family and friends. A viewing precedes the funeral, which usually occurs within three days. Cremation is not an option, and the body is never donated for medical research. Organ donation is not prohibited; however, the concept of removal of organs postmortem can create a theological quandary. Many Amish believe in a physical resurrection, and hence they question whether a complete body

will be available if organs are missing. Even without the theological concerns, organ donation is not a traditional practice, and many are reluctant to engage in what is for them a novel program.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

I was unabashedly eavesdropping while serving as a "taxi" for two mothers, and they kindly switched to English to allow me full access to their discussion. A young son had been struggling with a persistent cough, and they talked at length about the advantages of various remedies. The majority involved poultices applied to his chest at night to "draw" the cough. Over-the-counter medications were included in his treatment, but were combined with ointments and salves available from an Amish chiropractor, as well as a mixture composed primarily of burdock leaves.

Attitudes the Amish hold toward the use of complementary and alternative medicines (CAMs) is often paradoxical. They look askance at each other and their use of herbs, minerals, and magic to "heal" disease states. For example, "powwowing," once a more common intervention, is now a form of treatment perceived as supernatural and rarely used.[14] However, other alternative treatments continue unabated. The use of topical salves, ointments, and baths for congestion, colds, fevers, and general malaise is common. A variety of herbs, vitamins, and minerals, obtained from health food shops, drugstores, or specialized catalogues, serve as preventive health measures. Chiropractic and "balancing" massages and treatments address joint, muscle, and headache pain. It is rare to find a family that does not simultaneously dismiss as "superstitious" or hypervigilant the claims of another regarding a CAM while touting the benefits of their own. For example, one minister is adamant about the dangers of alternative medical approaches and repeatedly warns against them. At the same time, he attributes his own good health to a tonic prepared from an exotic mixture of wildflowers grown in the American southwest, packaged and sold as an elixir by a shaman from that area. Likewise, each year dozens of families travel to Mexico to specialized clinics immediately across the border that market their services to Amish communities. These services include surgeries and treatments for a variety of disease states, including cancers. Many are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration, and in fact have little or no research supporting their efficacy.

Despite the potential for quackery, research by the National Institutes

of Health through the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine gives evidence that at least some CAMs are viable supplements, if not substitutes, for mainstream medical approaches. However, this reasoned and scientifically disciplined approach to CAMs is as distant from the Amish approach as Earth from Mars. This does not mean that they refuse to read and absorb information that supports their use of nontraditional approaches. It does mean that they are more likely to be swayed by anecdotal evidence. As a rule, the Amish rely on reports within their own communities to determine both the efficacy of CAMs and whether an approach has been sanctioned.

Attitudes toward alternative medicines are further clouded by Amish involvement in Ponzi and pyramid schemes that tout the benefits of a medicinal aid and are then marketed through Amish entrepreneurs. These sales efforts create bubbles of excitement and acceptance for new health products, followed by their disappearance. The Amish themselves caution against the use of CAMs, although the efficacy of these warnings is unknown. The Amish are certainly not alone in their interest in CAMs, which constitute a large financial market across American society, and clearly many of the patterns of CAM use described apply to the larger society as well.

One study surveyed CAM use in the Holmes County, Ohio, area, comparing Amish and English.[15] Omitting licensed chiropractors, the treatments used by the Amish sample (n = 62 males, 72 females) are shown in table 1. As can be seen in the table, the variety of CAMs used is striking. Dietary supplements are most common, consistent with anecdotal data. Although this may seem innocuous, the Amish utilize herbs and minerals in different preparations for a variety of ills. Supplements treat breast cancer (as an alternative to post-operative chemotherapy), arthritis, diabetes, and schizophrenia, to name only a few clearly diagnosed diseases. They also treat symptoms that are vaguer in nature or that apply to multiple disease states. One Amish-produced and distributed brochure for a specific series of CAM products includes testimonials to their effectiveness in reducing the symptoms of acid indigestion, arterial plaque, bladder prolapse, depression, fibromyalgia, hemorrhoids, leukemia, multiple sclerosis, sarcoidosis, uterine prolapse, and yeast infections (to name but a few). In reading the testimonials it becomes evident that the supplements are designed to improve a qualitative sense of health rather than to attack specific disorders.

CAM	*Male* N(%)	*Female* N(%)
Massage	19 (31)	32 (44)
Reflexology	22 (35)	38 (53)
Reiki therapy	0 (0)	3 (04)
Polarity therapy	1 (02)	4 (06)
Acupuncture	2 (03)	7 (10)
Meditation	4 (06)	10 (14)
Yoga	0 (0)	4 (06)
Powwowing	1 (02)	2 (03)
Dietary supplements	51 (82)	65 (90)

The Amish also seek out those who practice iridology—diagnosis by observing patterns and shapes in the iris of the eye.[16] Often this is a preliminary diagnostic technique for prescription of specific herbs or minerals to be used by a patient. Iridology, like many CAM practices, appears to ebb and flow in its popularity, but practitioners continue to learn the technique within Amish communities.

The use of burdock leaves to heal burns remains popular as well.[17] The National Institutes of Health does not list the leaves among its CAMs, and common uses listed among those studying burdock as an alternative medicine do not include treatment of burns.[18] Still, there is limited research evidence that application of the plant leaves to burns in combination with honey (a frequent additional compound) aids in healing.[19] However, the use of such leaves as an alternative to medical care for children has led to scrutiny by protective service caseworkers, consulting with home health nurses to determine whether a patient is better served in a medical setting. Similar concerns arise when a child is dangerously ill and is treated by a parent with herbs or other CAMs rather than receiving medical attention. The issues mentioned in this chapter (e.g., financial considerations, usurping God's will) can influence the decision to care for a patient in the home and away from those with formal health care training. Once such a "reluctant" patient is under medical care, however, it is important to obtain a thorough history of all CAMs that may have been used. To do so requires empathy and a nonjudgmental approach.

Serious and Persistent Mental Illness

He was a tall, skinny adolescent, looking very much dispossessed in shelter care in his Amish clothes. His placement resulted from fear. His mother had fled the home and called the police from a nearby phone shack, and the responding officers had refused to allow him to return until the reasons for the disturbance had been determined. He had already been interviewed by a psychiatrist, but I was requested to perform psychological testing.

The incident that precipitated his placement was outrageous. In the midst of Rumspringa, he had purchased an electric guitar and stated his intention to become a rock star—not a career path his family preferred. Upon learning of the plan his father, a minister, began to berate him. The son soon escalated the argument from verbal to physical and showed no signs of slowing. It was at this point that his terrified mother ran for help.

What this seventeen-year-old youth had not previously shared with anyone was the cacophony of voices speaking to him on a regular basis—harsh, bitter voices, mocking his lifestyle and assuring him that he was doomed to hell despite any effort he might make to the contrary. Living in this pain, unable to share with others, he was intelligent enough, and still clung to enough reality amidst the psychosis, to know that the voices were hallucinations despite their terrifying presence. In speaking with his mother later, I learned that his maternal uncle had experienced similar ego-dystonic auditory hallucinations beginning at roughly the same age and was frequently psychiatrically hospitalized. She feared deeply for her son, unable to maintain a fatalistic acceptance when the issue was such a deep and pervasive change in his personality. However, with medication he stabilized and was able to function in the community.

This young man was fortunate in several ways. First, he came from a church that supported the use of psychoactive medication. He was able to return home and was provided care with a family who recognized his limitations and offered work that was not so stressful as to precipitate further psychotic episodes but kept him gainfully employed. Some bishops

are wary of the impact of psychotropics, preferring CAMs as a method of dealing with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI).

There are tragic stories in the Amish community of persons who were not recognized as ill, experiencing severe mood disorders or psychoses such as schizophrenia. In a few of these instances, the end result has been a tragic loss of life. In the most notorious case, an Amish man experiencing paranoid schizophrenia approached his bishop with his concerns. The bishop suggested that he use an alternative medicine consisting primarily of molasses to quell the disorder. He murdered and dismembered his wife, and in later years committed suicide.[20]

However, SPMI has been one area where the Amish often accept services without the reticence noted in other aspects of social service and mental health. In part this reflects the irrational behavior of those exhibiting the illness. Left without a logical means of coping with the disorder with which they are confronted, they are more easily convinced to turn to the world, laying aside their distrust in the hope that something—anything—can be done to return a mind loosened from its moorings to its proper place.

This is not to suggest that they fail to use CAMs with those with SPMI as well, or that all are so open (as the stories in chapter 3 attest). Even if faithfully maintaining a regimen of prescribed psychotropic medications, the family frequently encourages the use of dietary supplements or other CAMs to assist in recovery. There may also be greater complicity on the part of the family in efforts to titrate or simply stop psychotropic medications than is the case among the English.

The stigma of a SPMI is still strong among the Amish, in part due to their literal interpretation of the Bible. The New Testament is replete with incidents of Jesus and his followers casting out demons, and frequently the manifestation of these spirits is eerily similar to the symptoms we categorize as psychosis today (e.g., Matthew 8:28–34). While the Amish are not known for the practice of exorcism, there does appear to be a hope that prayer and natural interventions will "cure" problems of the mind.

The health care professional working with an Amish patient with a SPMI does well to remember that a long shadow is cast that reflects a host of concerned persons. In addition to the family, the attitude of the church is an important consideration in devising a treatment plan. If the bishop and/or ministers frown on psychotropic medications or believe in

a CAM-based "cure" for SPMI, the family is caught between the expectations of a health care system that espouses medical management and a culture that espouses the word of God. Once separated from "the world" of which the health care system is a part, there is little question which voice will be heeded.

Although education is useful, health care services that provide visits to the home are particularly beneficial for this type of impasse. In this case, the world demonstrates its willingness to come to the Amish—a powerful statement that greatly enhances the potential for education and understanding. Such a service also allows health care personnel to see firsthand the patient's surroundings, supports, and any issues that may arise in care, as well as to answer questions in a more relaxed setting for the family and patient than the office or hospital affords.

Recognizing and respecting beliefs about the root causes of SPMI and the potential avenues for healing are essential compromises if health care is to be accepted and utilized effectively. It may become important to encourage the family to work with a pharmacist to assure that drug interactions between CAMs and prescriptions do not potentiate or negate the impact of psychoactive medications.

The health care worker may also need to explore the nature of any hallucinations or delusions the patient experiences and discuss these openly with the family. If they are sufficiently troubling, the patient and immediate family may be unwilling to share these with clergy or extended family for fear of censure. This is a situation in which "English" status is helpful. An outsider can listen and comment without being judgmental of thoughts or feelings that may be antithetical to their religious beliefs.

Financial Considerations

The vignette at the beginning of this chapter mentions the desire of the parents to provide transportation themselves for a seriously injured child rather than have her taken by an emergency vehicle. That decision may at first appear to be callous indifference. On the contrary, both spiritual or theological and financial considerations play a part in such decision making.

God's will is a pervasive and inescapable reality, according to Amish belief. Events do not occur without God's awareness, understanding, and

permission. It is not given to those of us living in the mortal sphere to understand or (in the ideal) even to question God's will in the world. Rather, Christians passively accept his decisions. Accordingly, the Amish make reasonable efforts to provide for their well-being. They typically reject commercial health insurance because Christian duty compels them to care (physically and financially) for their brothers and sisters in need. Their collaborative effort to care for each other also articulates the deep Amish commitment to community. However, there is a delicate balance between the effort to sustain themselves and remain healthy and the effort to usurp God's will. Issues such as emergency medical transport via ambulance or helicopter, the use of extensive tests, or exhaustive procedures to prolong life all run the risk of overriding the will of God. Such thoughts may not be expressed directly, since they are well aware that even many Christians do not share this view. Nevertheless, these concerns lurk in the background of any health care interaction.

Hand in hand with this spiritual concern is a more pragmatic awareness of cost. Routine medical procedures may not be problematic, since they are frequently less costly. Many health care organizations also "discount" services in deference to their record of prompt and compliant payment. However, because the Amish avoid third-party insurance, even if a fee for service is discounted there is no "cap" at which an insurance carrier will begin to pay 100 percent, and discounted fees can still be a heavier financial burden than would be true for those with coverage. Likewise, there is normally no recourse in either a payment plan or personal bankruptcy.

The metaphor of ripples created by a stone thrown in a pond is appropriate for finding payers for hospital fees. The first recourse is the family, if the fees are manageable, the closest ripples to the point of entry. If not, financial support is solicited from the church, the next closest ripples; and if necessary, from the community, ripples still farther away. If the fees remain overwhelming, a statewide or even nationwide call for assistance goes out. The ripples expand in ever-widening circles as required until the financial need can be met.

Imagine, then, throwing a stone in a pond, quickly followed by another. The ripples of the two stones overlap. Imagine doing this again and again. This can be the effect of multiple large health care fees from different patients. A single church can find itself being asked for assistance from several sources. For this reason an individual patient (or the family) is reluctant to incur more costs than are absolutely necessary. In a collective

society, the responsibility rests not only with the patient but potentially with the larger group as well, depending on the size of the fees. For example, an infant born with a severe heart malfunction required multiple surgeries in the first few months of life and accumulated almost $1 million in *discounted* medical fees. In this case, the call for assistance was nationwide. If the group is already struggling under a financial burden of shared responsibility for medical costs, new fees become even more of an issue than they first appear, and the patient or family is reluctant to incur them.

A corollary consideration in incurring such fees is the scrutiny of the community. In some churches the bishop may watch a family's expenditures closely if they have received assistance. Although community involvement is standard practice, families do maintain a freedom of choice. To have that freedom curtailed because one has received assistance can be irritating at best and degrading at worst. One family received help with a father's medical bills. Shortly afterward both parents attended a benefit supper at their children's school. Although no confession or formal sanction was applied, their deacon visited and remonstrated with them for the frivolous use of their money when the church was providing support.

Amish communities have been exempted from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act as a rider to their longstanding exemption from Social Security, dating from the mid-1960s. Somewhat quietly, and with the uneasy scrutiny of the community, at least some patients with long-term medical issues in a few progressive groups are enrolling in state Medicaid and federal Medicare programs. It remains to be seen whether this trend will be allowed to continue, particularly since the legality of these enrollments may be in question.[21] As with many such trends, the community allows a few "mavericks" to experiment and observes the impact. If their way of life does not appear threatened, little will be said and the new approach will gradually integrate into the community. However, if there appears to be a threat, a consensus will emerge from the more powerful clergy that such activities must stop.

Health care services with the greatest success are those that provide outreach into the communities they serve. This includes regular clinics, informational meetings, on-site services offered in Amish communities, and newsletters designed specifically for Amish patients and their families.[22] Such services both indicate that the health care entity has a vested interest in their Amish patients and recognize the need to enter their cul-

ture. These services also provide information in settings that are far less stressful, hence far more receptive, than urgent or emergency medical care. The feedback from both Amish people and health care providers is then useful to facilitate improved interaction and communication when more immediate services are required.

CHAPTER 13

Social Work and Social Services

My involvement with this family was indirect, providing psychological testing to the father after a protective service agency intervened with the children. He had been diagnosed with a progressive dementing disease, and in my assessment his decline was apparent. For example, on a measure of vocabulary skills he could not formulate his responses in English. When I suggested he do so in dialect, he was much more fluent (and in that structured task my limited translation skills allowed me to comprehend him). However, for some time afterward he was unable to revert to English in responding to my questions. His mind would simply not make the transition back. I was required to ask his wife to enter the session and translate.

The intervening agency had received reports of his episodic violence toward the children. When interviewed in the investigation, their mother acknowledged other dangerous incidents. For example, he insisted on driving the buggy despite his inability to manage the horse, he sometimes became confused and lost when walking in the fields near his home, and he was prone to risky and potentially life-threatening accidents when making repairs or doing chores. His impaired judgment placed others at risk beyond the physical abuse. For instance, he was found preparing to pour antifreeze into the well as a preventive to keep the water from freezing during the winter months, and he became enraged when stopped.

His bishop was keenly aware of these problems, but since there was no son old enough to assume responsibility for the family and no adult male relative in close proximity, the church's approach was ineffective.

This father was encouraged to allow others to handle his affairs, but he was left with wide latitude and discretion regarding his own behavior. This was an attempt to provide supervision but avoid abdicating the patriarchal role. At the same time, the mother was chided for failing to cooperate with his demands, despite the fact they could be unreasonable.

Disapproval by the clergy included her "teamwork" with the protective services agency and English mental health personnel. In their opinion, she should cooperate at an absolute minimum to fulfill the obligations of the law. Interaction beyond these requirements was symptomatic of her lack of submission and therefore a necessary area of correction. As a result she was placed in Unfriddah, a partial withdrawal of the fellowship of the church.

The children had been removed from the home by a caseworker and placed in relative foster care. The case plan intended to reunify the family once the father's status was no longer a threat. Instead, the case devolved into a battle of wills between the clergy and the protective service agency. The ministers resisted any intervention that stripped even an iota of the father's authority, insisting instead that the mother be the one to receive treatment. The caseworker saw the need for the father to be supervised or removed from the home in order for the children to return safely and refused to compromise on this condition of reunification.

A solution to the problem eventually arose, not by dint of agreement, but as a consequence of the father's deteriorating health. He became so severely impaired that physical mobility was impossible, and the children were returned to the home. Unfortunately, because the case pitted the protective service agency against the church, it created a backlash in the community, with many ministers preaching warnings about the dangers of reporting alleged abuse to the authorities.

The focus of social service agencies in recent years mirrors changing expectations. The emphasis on family preservation has seesawed with child protection, and in response social services are more integrally involved with law enforcement.[1] At the same time, with the 1972 Supreme Court decision in *Wisconsin v. Yoder et al.*, Amish private schools have increasingly proliferated, further insulating the Amish from

the world and fueling arguments with the mainstream culture about the type of future that their children have a right to expect.[2]

Caseworkers are familiar with the lingering resentments and lack of cooperation their work so often causes in any setting. Regardless of how dysfunctional a family may be in supervising its children, its members resent the intrusion of a state-appointed representative who says in both implicit and explicit terms, "You are incapable of caring for and protecting your child(ren) without external supports." If the family of origin is shredded, too often the extended family is also in tatters, and the caseworker experiences the conflicting motives, loyalties, and agendas of those who insert themselves into an investigation or case, weighing in for the express purpose of tilting the outcome in the direction they perceive as beneficial, with minimal regard for the needs of the child.

The disparity between English and Amish families when abuse is uncovered can appear superficially similar. Both sets of families often react with shock and disbelief and with an accompanying effort at denial and self-protection. There may be an initial period of erratic "problem-solving" behaviors, based on a logic more designed to return the family system to status quo than to provide relief to the victims and intervention with the perpetrators. If the issue is physical abuse, the family may succumb to a prolonged history of intimidation and fear. Revelation of the abuse is received with apparent apathy toward the perpetrator and hostility toward those intervening, the frightened response of long-term victims. Yet in an Amish family the hierarchical, patriarchal society in which they live creates a different trajectory than that confronted in the larger culture.

This chapter addresses the role of social work and case management in Amish communities. The mandate and administrative practices of agencies with the authority to provide services differs in specifics by state, but the principles of community care are overarching.

The case that begins this chapter highlights the variety of demands that funnel into the role of child protective services. Here, the caseworker served as a clearinghouse for information from both the attending family physician and the father's neurologist and utilized my services as a psychologist. Lest the team grow to unwieldy proportions, she also assumed roles that might be ascribed in other situations to law enforcement, public health, and adult protective services. And in functioning de facto as each of these guardians of either patient or public welfare in addition to her primary role as case manager for the children in the family, she became

the "face" of intrusive government for the Amish clergy, who stood as the power in the community with whom she must reckon.

The complexity of such a role assures two things. First, it guarantees that someone will be frustrated. There are simply too many demands, too many expectations, and too many points of view to equitably distribute time, energy, and resources and successfully meet the needs of each constituent represented. Second, it assures that those who do their jobs well will learn the art of maneuvering to meet the needs of the client. The wisdom to choose which regulations are rigidly enforced and which are malleable becomes an essential tool for the effective caseworker.

Still, for the Amish no group, program, or issue is more frightening than the umbrella agencies that house child protective services. This is state control of their lives at its most intrusive, the prerogative of the government to protect its most helpless citizens by overriding family, church, and community support to supervise and, if necessary, to remove children from their homes. An Amish bishop in Indiana wrote to a caseworker who had removed children from an abusive situation. Even though the bishop agreed that they were in danger, he stated in his letter: "Having children placed in a foster home for 24 to 72 hours causes an additional trauma. Even if it would be an Amish foster home the parents would probably be complete strangers to the children."[3] He went on to state his concerns with removing children from any Amish home for any reason.

The Family

One paradox in attempting to provide services is the expectation that sin is handled within the community. Kraybill has referred to confession as "Amish therapy."[4] The matrix of confessions includes two types, free will and requested. Those that are free will reflect the initiative and the conscience of the member, who voluntarily confesses a transgression in front of the assembled church. Requested confessions are those mandated by the clergy to address a behavior by a church member that violates the Ordnung or otherwise offends expectations. Based on the severity of the sin and to a lesser extent on the temperament of the clergy, confessions may be received from the penitent in private, in public (sitting or kneeling), or kneeling followed by a six-week ban.[5] The confession is considered a confidential matter to be held closely within the confines of the church. While there may be gossip despite this injunction, rumors are internal to

the community and thus contained. They are not shared with "the world," an important distinction in the minds of many Amish.

Threats, cajoling, and appealing to a higher authority are all wasted effort to change a social system based on theocracy. Repeatedly, the effort to expose child sexual or physical abuse results in effective intervention in the identified case, only to drive multiple unreported cases even farther underground.[6] Of concern is the potential for such aggressive tactics to forestall even confession, so that there is virtually no accountability for abusers.

A baptized member will frequently have already confessed abuse. Confession may be cathartic or cleansing, but many also find it humiliating. Once it is completed, if the member demonstrates true repentance he or she is fully restored to fellowship and the sin is then considered "forgiven and forgotten." Depending on the age of the victim and attitudes among the family, church, and community, the victim may bear partial responsibility for the sin as well. If the offender is not baptized into the church, there is no formal confession, but an informal expectation of a penitent demeanor may still exist. The intrusion of a social service agency, with its interviews, investigatory authority, and external policies and decision-making power, effectively countermands the position of the church.

How then does the caseworker remain simultaneously sensitive to the expectations of the community and accountable to an agency that anticipates vigorous case management in response to child maltreatment? Several factors need to be considered.

In addition to understanding the reluctance of families to report, it is essential to empathize with their plight. Not only the victim, but the victim's family and clergy need to experience a caseworker who remains sensitive to community beliefs and respects the muted role the state is expected to play in Amish life. "Muting" that role may be impossible if children are in danger. Still, carefully explaining the need for the state's involvement, giving time to respond to questions, and reassuring all concerned that the intrusion is meant to be temporary will quell at least some fears.

Yet it is at exactly this point that the caseworker is caught between opposing, mutually implacable forces. The "state" as represented by a branch protecting children is a bureaucracy, and bureaucracies by their nature move in narrowly defined and routinized procedures. The caseworker may be able to improvise within narrow limits, but he or she remains con-

stricted by expectations of statute and policy. "Bending the rules" can result in sanctions or disciplinary action against the caseworker. Across the table sits the victim(s) and family, facing equally implacable forces. The church, and behind the church the community, are almost a literal presence standing in lockstep support in the face of potential oppression by the state. The family can appear passive, but that passivity masks a stubbornly honed resistance. Successful solutions to this standoff take creativity.

The caseworker does well to "read" the unfolding interactions. What is the working relationship between the clergy and the family? What is the attitude of extended family toward this situation? Where do tensions lie? How is blame distributed? Remember, "blame" may accrue to victims in ways that are unacceptable to a liberal twenty-first-century mindset, and yet attempting to intervene for the well-being of the victims and change entrenched attitudes about responsibility can create greater antipathy than success. For Amish more than English, mapping the emotional and interpersonal interactions between church (clergy) and immediate and extended family gives an essential picture of how best to integrate them into an intervention team. The church and community standing collectively behind the victim and family can serve a range of purposes. At their best, they are an encouragement. Demonstrating a solidarity that practice has also honed to clockwork precision, they provide emotional, psychological, and spiritual support during times of crisis. At their worst, they rule by fear, intimidating the family or identified victim with a lack of support, partial or full expulsion from the church on at least a temporary basis, and even the potential to withhold financial assistance for medical needs by refusing to pursue broader support from the community if a medical debt is incurred. Reality is normally somewhere between these two extremes. While the Amish fall short of the ideal caring and concern that Gelassenheit encourages, neither do they sink to the depths of willful control and malice suggested by the most negative possibilities.

The Clergy

Flowing logically from the discussion above is the need to incorporate the extended community in any service plan. Integrating as many Amish faces as possible into a team approach increases the likelihood of successful intervention. Without community support, change will be superficial at best and certainly has no lasting potential. Yet, as the vignette that began

this chapter demonstrates, including the clergy may at times require finesse as to the degree and duration of their involvement. The same is true of extended family.

Involving clergy in a team approach can be like herding cats. Still, assuming the family agrees to it, their importance cannot be overestimated. Clergy is a foundation of the Amish social system. They hold the authority that exists in the church and over the family. Their imprimatur on services greatly eases the transition of English providers into the community.

The dilemma for those who have attempted to incorporate the clergy into their work and found it a dramatic failure becomes how to manage recalcitrant clergy. There are bishops and ministers who have no intention of involving themselves in a team approach. Still, these same individuals will be preaching (formally or informally) against the state, with or without the invitation to be involved, and there is no guarantee that they will reject such involvement without being asked. The invitation to participate also leaves the caseworker in a better position in future investigations to make clear that the clergy are always invited to participate if possible. The only times they are not involved is when they choose not to be or when the family has specifically requested that they remain absent.

The Amish family had five younger children still in the home when the father's abusive behavior was reported. Relative placements were found for each, and although there was a certain amount of informality and lack of a "paper trail" that assured that the criteria for foster care was met in each new home, the lack of disruption to the children and demonstration of good faith to the community more than balanced the failure to dot the *i*'s and cross the *t*'s.

The caseworker called a meeting of the family's clergy to discuss the case and potential reunification of the family. I was present as the treating counselor, as was the guardian ad litem (G.a.L.), an attorney appointed by the court to protect the interests of the children. Both the caseworker and the G.a.L. were female.

The meeting began well, with the bishop, two ministers, and deacon all present. The caseworker and the G.a.L. explained the intricacies of policy and procedure that were followed to remove the children from the home, the nature and purpose of hearings that would occur to monitor the progress of the case, and the requirements expected of the family in order to reunify. The clergy asked only one question, funneled

through the bishop: How much time would elapse before the children could be returned?

This question was posed modestly, rather than as a challenge. They listened in what appeared to be polite and thoughtful postures throughout the meeting, posing this query toward the end. When told that the matter would depend on the family's cooperation, they appeared satisfied and left after parting handshakes (a convention they followed in deference to English expectations).

A few weeks later I visited the bishop, and the conversation turned to the conference. Initially, he simply commented that it was "good." When I thanked him and the other clergy for taking time away from their work to attend a meeting in the middle of the day, knowing the strain it placed on them financially, he became more open. "Honestly, Jim," he said, "I didn't understand much of what they said, and neither did anybody else. What happens with the kids?"

Rapidly, I learned that what had been taken for attentive interest was virtually total confusion. None of the clergy had a sufficient foundation with the legal and social service policies or service planning being described to understand the terminology used. Further (I surmised), because the presenters were female, rather than admit their confusion, they preferred to sit in silence, hoping to piece the puzzle together when they were alone.

I was able to give an abbreviated version of the intervention plan that made sense but that also troubled the bishop deeply, since much of it violated Amish beliefs. We then discussed potential compromises, and I proposed a second meeting.

The second interaction was much more productive, in that all parties better understood each other. It also led to a church-wide meeting, held with the permission of the family, in which the G.a.L. and I spoke with almost all of the adult members to explain the process that was occurring. That meeting helped alleviate fears and better informed the community about expectations for child abuse reporting.

Amish humility also led to a humorous incident. The G.a.L. and I had spoken at length, responded to questions, and the group had sung a parting hymn at the bishop's leading. We were both emotionally drained and physically exhausted. As is so often true with such gatherings, the expressions of those facing us gave little hint as to how we were received. As the

last act of the meeting, the bishop stood, pointed to us as the only English in the room and said "This—this is what we have been working with." (We debated whether "this" meant it was time to make a run for the car. Only later did we learn he meant it as a compliment.)

Medical Care

The primary interface between social services and the Amish on medical issues will be medical refusal for minors. Their use of alternative medicines and the rare use of powwowing were discussed in chapter 12. While they rely on physicians for most emergency medical services and many illnesses, they may employ complementary and alternative medicines to the exclusion of mainstream health care.[7] In these cases the driving force resisting medical care may be financial, particularly if the family feels uncomfortable seeking money from the church or larger community. The driving force may also be closer to home. If there is a family history of caring for the sick or injured with a particular alternative approach, then deviating from that plan by seeking medical attention may be seen as violating tradition.

The importance of understanding Amish thought processes cannot be underestimated. A developmentally delayed Amish woman in late adolescence was impregnated by an unknown (or unreported) male. Late during the second trimester of her pregnancy, she presented at a hospital emergency room with complaints of abdominal cramping and vaginal bleeding. The fetus had been dead in utero for some time. Emergency room personnel raised concerns about the odd behavior of the parents, who appeared more concerned about returning their daughter home than about immediate medical care. A child protective services worker (who was already involved with the family) was called and attempted to talk with them, but they became even more agitated and evasive. Eventually, the family's intransigence and refusal to provide answers resulted in a police investigation paralleling the coroner's examination of the fetus.

Ironically, I was also involved with the family at the time. Only after the furor subsided with no charges pressed, did I learn, very discreetly and indirectly, that an adult family member had performed a powwowing ritual designed to induce abortion (although it involved no physical manipulation). The parents therefore felt both responsible for, and horribly guilty about, the death of the fetus. This explained their evasive behavior

when questioned in the hospital, a possibility that no one had thought to pursue since no one was sufficiently familiar with their customs.

Again, the caseworker does well to read the unfolding interaction rather than immediately assume that intransigence is based on resistance or a lack of knowledge.

Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse among the Amish is a significant concern for several reasons. First, in a collective society it has the potential to continue hidden and unreported across time. Second, in a patriarchal society the potential for male offenders to devalue women and use them as sexual objects is a heightened risk. Third, pockets of Amish culture that parse responsibility to the victim are at greater risk for creation of a "victim mentality" in which those who are perpetrators can deny responsibility and those who have been assaulted can come to believe that they are at fault. Fourth, the model of confession and forgiveness means that sexual abuse that is recognized and confronted may not be effectively treated.

There are no statistics to use as a reference point that even estimate the prevalence of sexual abuse in Amish communities. As a working hypothesis, however, it would seem probable that one offender has access to many more victims than would be true in mainstream American culture. This would be true due to the size of the family of origin and the intermingling of extended family members. Access to many vulnerable victims would be further exacerbated because so many persons in the church community and extended family live in close proximity where an offender can track and anticipate daily habits and routines. These hypotheses seem supported by those Amish offenders whose histories I know.

Children's safety from sexual abuse must be a primary concern. Philhaven, a professional behavioral health care facility in Pennsylvania started by, and loosely affiliated with, mainstream Mennonite churches, operates programs specifically for the Amish. One such Amish-driven program partners with child protection agencies to provide a sex offender treatment that simultaneously respects beliefs and protects children, a novel and efficacious approach.

When sexual abuse of a child is reported, offenders who accept this treatment intervention are managed in community-based services. Clergy and laypersons who are willing to commit to the care of the individual

contract with the offender to monitor and supervise him as he pursues treatment, and he remains in the community or (if necessary) is initially placed in an Amish-run residential facility. The program requires a contract (which function s as much as a covenant as a contract) between the offender, community supporters, and those providing services, and he is expected to participate fully in treatment. Those who fail to do so can be remanded to traditional treatment programs or even incarcerated.

The following is a plan that several Conservative Mennonite and Amish churches have used when abuse situations arise in the church. It includes two model contracts.[8]

Sex Offender Treatment Plan

The aims and intentions of the model treatment plan are as follows:

1. To remove the Perpetrator from the situation to assure that there will not be more victims.
2. To have the Perpetrator enter an appropriate program to rehabilitate and to again become a trustworthy member of the community.
3. To design a probation plan that will be carefully monitored and enforced. The length of the rehabilitation/treatment program is to be tailored directly to the severity of the offense, the degree of remorse, the degree of cooperation and the visible fruits of repentance.
4. To have support services/options available to the victims where they will be able to work through their issues in a productive way, to experience and to extend forgiveness, to deal with anger and/or resentment and to regain confidence and trust.
5. That this program be presented to [appropriate agency] for approval, realizing that we are required by law and moral commitment to report these instances. Our goal is to work closely with your Agency on this.

The following is a sample treatment contract:

Treatment/Counseling Agreement

Developed by [Perpetrator and Wife], Their Support Team, Their Ministry, Family, and the Treatment Team at [Residential or Mental Health Service Providing Services]

This plan has been approved by the undersigned persons and becomes effective on the date listed. The program consists of the following stipulations and conditions and is recognized as "Plan A":

1. That upon successfully completing the [residential] program, client will transition to the home community, go back to his job, and agree to work closely with his support team and counselor.
2. That client cannot be in the presence of minors without having an approved and qualified third party physically present. These third parties will need to be approved by the Support Team. There are no exceptions.
3. That [client's wife] continue with her counselor and support team to gain confidence and trust, as well as improving communication skills.
4. Client and wife realize that to make their marriage work well they will need to make adjustments in their responses to each other. Their desire is to develop skills in these areas.
5. That at two-month intervals, starting from the date listed, client, his support team, and counselors will meet to hold a conference. At these meetings the conference will make a decision on whether he has been successful in providing his share of the agreement. Should the conference decide that he has been successful, then Plan A may continue to the next meeting.
6. Should, however, the decision be made that he has been unable to provide his share of the agreement, then Plan B becomes effective. Plan B consists of entering a more intensive residential program.
7. Client agrees that to be successful he will need to make a dedicated and focused commitment to change. He also needs to realize that for him to be successful he will need to be held accountable.
8. The Support Team agrees to support client in constructive ways, to encourage him in good ways, and to hold him accountable. The team, along with client and his counselors, shall have total responsibility in deciding (a) if he has been successful and (b) what constitutes success.
9. The Support Team shall have the ability to bring more persons on board should they see the need to do so. In summary, the above parties will need to work together very closely to be successful.

If needed:

10. We recommend that the Support Team take training to more fully understand the seriousness of their assignment.
11. That the victims receive professional help to work through their issues.

Signed:

_____ Date: _____

_____

_____

Etc.

This program removes the perpetrator and, based on the dynamics and interactive potential of these families, is a much more logical step than attempting a relative foster placement for the victims. In particular, the dynamics of geographic proximity and interrelationships mean that cousins will be nearby, and children will likely maintain strong ties with aunts and uncles, so that foster placement in a collective society does not provide the separation of victims from their perpetrators that would be true in mainstream culture. Moreover, removing the primary targets of victimization does not necessarily secure the safety of secondary targets.

A plan has been utilized in some counties in Indiana to address the issue of reporting child abuse. One of the larger Amish communities initiated a liaison program with the local child protective services agency. An Amish male, respected by his peers and by social service professionals, was designated as the "reporting person" for abuse in the community. Thus, Amish people could generate reports to another Amish person rather than into the English system. The liaison then passed the information to the agency, assisting the most efficacious way for the parties to meet and handle the issue.

Caseworkers anticipate resistance from their clients. The work of ferreting out child abuse is demanding, brutal, and underpaid. Perpetrators deny, minimize, lie, distort, and project responsibility and blame onto others, often refusing to accept the fact that their own actions caused the state to become involved in their lives. These are angry people, and the target for their rage is too often the caseworker who serves as a lightning rod on which to release their pent and charged hostility.

In working within Amish communities, these difficulties are further compounded by the patriarchy and expectations for submission. Mothers, while anxious to protect their children, will often choose to submit to a husband's authority rather than report abuse. Clergy may consider the abuse managed within the community, resent the intrusion of caseworkers, and fear negative publicity for their church. And the children themselves, already indoctrinated in the hierarchical nature of their culture, may regard external support services as an infringement on the family.

The successful caseworker finds that delicate balance between protecting the state's most vulnerable citizens and respecting the beliefs of the culture that cares for them. To do so requires a genuine and empathic understanding of child, family, and church (clergy). Such agreement does not imply acceptance of all practices and behaviors. It does imply a willingness

to allow differences in worldviews and, as much as possible, to respect the view of those who are being asked to violate a primary tenet of their beliefs and place their trust in the state.

Casework with the Amish is not a style of interpersonal interaction suited for every caseworker, nor should it be. It is preferable to designate one or two personnel from an agency to interact with the local community on a regular basis in order to build rapport, establish relationships, and learn the idiosyncrasies of the Ordnung and customs within that particular Amish group. Developing strong relationships proactively facilitates solving specific problems when they arise. It also increases potential reporting, since the Amish rely on interpersonal trust rather than a broader confidence in outside public agencies. Rapport with key leaders in any affiliation is also beneficial in developing a working relationship with the community that facilitates reporting and minimizes misunderstandings.

CHAPTER 14

Guidelines for Service to the Amish

Several years ago I was making my rounds in an Amish community. It was one of the first true days of spring following a hard Indiana winter, and it seemed that everyone who had an excuse was outside. Turning into the home of the family I intended to visit, I noted that not only people but appliances were taking advantage of the weather. There, adorning the otherwise neat and empty backyard, stood an upright vacuum cleaner.

In all honesty I was less surprised to see a vacuum cleaner at an Amish home (since I knew the innovations to which battery power could be applied) than to see a vacuum cleaner perched proudly in the middle of the back lawn. So, as a teenage son emerged from the home, after appropriate greetings I launched into what I considered repartee:

"You know, the English are more into lawn gnomes." (No response.) "Vacuuming the grass today?" (Still no response.) In a final act of desperation, I threw a verbal "Hail Mary" and said, "What is that vacuum cleaner doing there?"

"Oh!" he said, brightening considerably now that he understood my inane chatter. "We bought that at Goodwill yesterday, and we're getting the 'English house smell' out."

It was several weeks before I could enter my own house without sniffing cautiously.

The mother of the family later learned of this conversation and apologetically explained that her son had misunderstood the situation. Still, I have never received an adequate explanation of that vacuum's presence in the backyard.

On the surface the story is an amusing anecdote. At a deeper level it reflects the complexity and difficulty of understanding and interpreting Amish culture. Was I given accurate (but socially inappropriate) information about the purpose of "airing out" a used vacuum? At a minimum, it reflected an Amish teen's beliefs about the reason for keeping the appliance in the yard. It is also noteworthy that the vacuum cleaner was an acceptable appliance in this church district. Twenty feet across the road, in a separately delineated district, such an appliance was strictly forbidden. The story also reflects my misguided attempts to evoke laughter. "Zingers" that my English friends would have thoroughly enjoyed fell flat. It would be merciful to place blame on the age of the audience, but this is not necessarily the case. Dry, sarcastic wit is not a staple of Amish humor. To be blunt, my efforts were misplaced.

Over time and with experience, the mysteries and vagaries of working with the Amish seem to multiply rather than diminish. This story merely confirms that there is much about them that remains undiscovered and may never be fully known. The metaphor of peeling an onion applies. Layer upon layer comes away, but there is always another lying just beneath what has been uncovered. Over time one begins to realize that a quest to completely peel away the layers will never succeed. We must be content with only a partial knowledge of what lies beneath our gaze.

I was present with the family as an elderly member faced a serious surgery. Given his age and the potential complications, it was quite possible that it would not be successful, and yet failing to operate guaranteed his demise. Both his brother (two years younger) and his daughter spoke to him, each affirming that if he died they were confident that he would see Jesus.

The surgery was a success, and several weeks after he was home I had an opportunity to speak with his brother about the scene I had witnessed. Specifically, I commented on the statements by family that he would see Jesus. I confirmed once again that he and the family did not believe in an assurance of salvation but hoped that they would be saved, and he readily agreed. When I posed the paradox of the statements made to his brother and the assurance they seemed to imply, his face became clouded with thought. Eventually, his face brightened, and turning to me with a knowing smile, he said, "I suppose it would sound that way to you, wouldn't it?"

There are simply patterns of thought and understandings among the Amish that are not given to us to completely comprehend, be they humorous or deeply spiritual.

Serving Amish People

The content of each preceding chapter provides expanded vignettes, narratives, and information to increase cultural competence in working with the Amish. This chapter summarizes essential points for effective service with this Plain people.

1. *Respect the line in the sand.* The Amish seek to separate from the world. To "be" Amish requires a line of separation. Forever and anon, no matter how close a relationship may seem, no matter the intimacy or personal nature of details shared, there will come a moment when English are on one side of that line and Amish are on the other. The exceptions prove the rule: the rare marriage in which one partner is English, the other Amish, the friendships that are in some ways closer across the line than the friendships behind it. And yet these exceptions require the individuals involved to sacrifice and compartmentalize their lives in awkward and demanding ways. The Siren's song of the world is to be resisted if an individual is to remain true to the beliefs of the church. Recognizing this limitation does more to ease their burden than ours.

2. *You can't fight tradition.* "Tradition" does not mean "it's always been done that way and we will never change." Tradition does mean "we engage in change cautiously, carefully, and in small steps if at all." Any program, plan, or intervention needs to recognize this process. A proposed change that may appear innocuous to us may in reality be a delicate matter. Therefore, we must consider the impact on community standards, rules, and expectations, particularly if the change is brought from "the world," or outside the community.

3. *Anything worth doing is worth doing slowly.* When Mae West offered this quip, it is unlikely she had a cultural impasse in mind. Still, it fits. For the Amish to embrace change, not only those impacted but those who will pass judgment on the impact must be persuaded of the logical need.[1] If such persuasion does not succeed, the changes made will be situation-specific and revert to former status immediately upon removal of the external impetus. Farm safety and preventive health programs, among others, have repeatedly been offered and accepted for the time that an outside

agency maintained the service. Such services rarely gain long-term acceptance in the community if they are imported quickly without appropriate discussion, time for reflection, and slow build-up.

4. *If you build it, they will come. (And it will last as long as you tend it carefully.)* This is actually a corollary to the point above. Amish-initiated and Amish-driven programs have a much longer life expectancy than English-initiated and driven programs. For example, residential treatment centers such as Green Pasture in Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania, and Rest Haven in Goshen, Indiana, were Amish-initiated and driven programs despite the fact that they collaborate with non-Amish mental health centers. On a much smaller scale, the Amish Youth Vision Project in Topeka, Indiana, is a successful alcohol and drug education program for adolescents, but it was largely English-initiated, and despite its Amish emphasis and approach, remains English-driven. Upon the removal of English support, despite the fact Amish youth would be forced to return to programs they and their parents dislike intensely, the Vision Project would fold.

Similar results have been observed time and again with English programs that develop an outreach to the Amish community. As long as English support is maintained, the program thrives. Once that support is removed, the program will not be self-sustaining. This is not a criticism or a suggestion that such programs should not exist, but it is an expectation that should be recognized in the early planning.

5. *Don't be a tourist.* "Tourists," as the term is used here, do not engage in the lives of the Amish. They either visit communities to gaze with the express purpose of meeting their own need for a nostalgic re-creation of an idyllic past,[2] allow Hollywood to project an image that they then absorb,[3] or place a naïve trust in the media's sensationalized and/or narrowed selections of Amish life.[4] Understanding is then circumscribed by the "spin" that others, with a vested interest in their own depiction, impose on this complex culture. True cultural competence involves much greater investment of time and energy, and a suspension of critical judgment.

6. *Buckle down and read.* To avoid the "tourist" trap requires a commitment to reading. Fiction on the Amish proliferates and serves a minimal purpose in developing a true understanding.[5] Much more helpful are numerous scholarly works that demystify Amish life. Several Amish magazines and newspapers are very helpful primary sources in learning more about Amish life. Books by former members can also be helpful, but many of them are written by disillusioned and embittered ex-members whose

stories slant against the "idyllic" view of Amish life by emphasizing its dysfunctions and horrors. Nevertheless, several of these authors have written telling and poignant autobiographies that cast an often-unseen view.[6] The bibliography contains many resources, and Appendix C contains a short list of recommendations of sources for further reading.

7. *Silence is golden.* This imperative comes from my own experience as well as having observed others. The Amish are often polite in the face of talkative individuals. If given time to process in the slow, cautious cadence they frequently use when interacting with the world, they will share. If we rush them, however, they will wait for us to chatter on, but the moment is lost. Take the time to truly listen, reflect on what is said, and gain an understanding not only of the words but the nonverbal communication employed to communicate effectively.

8. *You've obviously mistaken me for someone who cares.* This humorous slogan is a corollary to the point above. The Amish penchant for quiet and reserve can be mistaken for acquiescence. This is not the case. A quiet and thoughtful response to a presentation, concern, or any effort to sway or convince them of a needed course of action merely reflects the calm deliberation with which they respond to virtually any request that does not require an immediate and blatant "no." They will often need time to process, consider, and perhaps consult with clergy or other members of the family before responding positively or negatively to a choice, including (but certainly not limited to) health care, legal decisions, and mental health treatment options.

9. *Horn broke. Watch for finger.* Both a corollary to the point above and a humorous slogan often seen on bumper stickers, the statement implies the need to carefully attend to body language. While Amish body language is much more subtle than "the finger," the warning stands. It takes many years of practice to begin to read the signals conveyed through physical mannerisms and expressions. Even then, I readily admit, I am a novice. Yet they observe and understand each other quite well, digesting information and interacting at a level that passes us by. The issue is one of high-context vs. low-context culture. As members of a high-context culture, Amish people see and process many more cues from nonverbal communication than we do.

10. *Religion and politics do mix.* This refers, not to the politics of state and nation, but to the politics of alliances and rifts that exist in any Amish community. Being aware of which churches are in (or out of) fellowship

with one another, which bishops and ministers are aligned, and which ones have crossed metaphorical swords is essential to the smooth operation of any intervention or program. Such sensitive information can often be gleaned indirectly if a lay person or family member is willing to report these conflicts. Asking if a particular bishop would be a good person to have on the team or one who should be consulted often provides clues to underlying tensions. If this course of action is unavailable, asking directly whether a church is in fellowship, provided it is done in a neutral and nonjudgmental manner, may avoid greater discomfort in the future and add to program success.

11. *What happens in Vegas doesn't always stay in Vegas.* The Amish would not characterize themselves as "gossips." It is, however, the nature of members in a high-context, collective society to share information about each other on an ongoing basis. I titled one of my book chapters "Of Course It's Confidential: Only the Community Knows."[7] The Amish have much lower expectations of privacy than we prefer by virtue of our socialization in a more individualistic culture. However, as professionals we should recognize that the most innocuous statements can be passed from one person to another and become the source of what the whole community learns about us. It can become a walk on a confidentiality tightrope to decide whether to acknowledge that indeed this person was in the waiting room yesterday (even though four other Amish were there as well and saw her), or that indeed one's car was sitting for an hour in front of an Amish home. Yet confirmation of such seemingly trivial details can disperse information far and wide.

12. *It's no wonder that truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense.* Mark Twain provided this quip, and it applies to our perceptions of Amish beliefs. For example, why the freedom to lease a computer but not buy one? Why allow a family member who has left the Amish to drive a van and take remaining members to work, but "shun" him at family gatherings? In part, what we observe are the contortions of individuals following the rules of a collective society. The "collective" rule may be bent or distorted in order to accommodate the unique needs of the individual or family. Provided it is not broken or bent to the point that the clergy feel it has been violated, some members are allowed this freedom. And in part, we observe the paradox present in all human behavior. We buy self-propelled lawn mowers, weedeaters, electric hedge trimmers, and snow

blowers, hire lawn and cleaning services, and then simultaneously buy a membership in a gym.[8]

13. *A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way.* Again this is Mark Twain's wisdom. The Amish actually encompass a variety of Ordnungs and belief structures under a broad rubric, albeit one with sharply defined edges. Because of this, no single intervention or program can be consistently successful. What works in one situation with one family, church, or community may well fail or require major adaptation the next time it is applied. Those who intend to work with this group need to prepare for such failures and realistically plan for means to modify and move forward when these occur.

14. *We don't care how much you know until we know how much you care.* This frequent Amish saying, mentioned earlier in this book, merits repeating. It is a strong acknowledgement of their emphasis on genuineness and relationships over professional certification, knowledge, and skill. The Amish value compassion and empathy.

15. *Humility breeds contempt.* There is a paradox in the Amish emphasis on humility. Within their culture they work hard to insure their ongoing deference to each other. Many will even disdain teaching their children basic rules of etiquette, such as saying "please" and "thank you," because routine use of these phrases is seen as prideful. Yet in responding to non-Amish, there can be a sense of superiority. For example, one Amish young man spoke to me with deep pain about his struggle to remain humble. "When I think of the English," he noted, "so often I think of them as second-class. Sometimes I don't even think of them as human! And I know that's not right." (I did not bother in the moment to point out to him that I was English, but simply took what I hoped was an indirect compliment.)

Three factors contribute to this attitude. First is the decision to turn one's back on the technological advances in the world and live a much more physically demanding life than would otherwise be required. Often this breeds a sense of purpose and satisfaction that equates with a sense of superiority. Second, many in the world are fascinated by the Amish lifestyle and express their admiration, a further incentive to feel superior. Third, and from the opposite direction, in any area in which the Amish live some percentage of their English neighbors scorn certain Amish practices. This can lead to a withdrawal and pride as a reaction to being "different" from such people. Whatever the causes, work with the Amish needs

to recognize this potential disdain toward the world hidden quietly beneath their humility.

16. *God is in control.* It is all too easy for us to pay lip service to cultural competence by attending to issues of dress, diet, comportment—in short, the external behaviors that allow a professional to appear competent. It is another matter entirely to recognize and respect the Amish belief that God is in control of all things, and that Satan is active as well. Just as submission of women can be a bitter pill to swallow, the assertion that God knows and causes or at least allows every action—a child-like faith in God's unswerving hold on all of creation—can also be quite unsettling. Yet this omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God is the cornerstone of their faith. If they question it, we are observing their faith waver, and an impending time of crisis. We need not agree to accept the belief. We do need to recognize that for them, every incident in their lives, including tragedy, is either mandated or allowed by God to serve a larger purpose.

Success in serving the Amish involves a commitment of time and energy as well as a willingness to explore one's own defenses and the uses of one's professional role. It is demanding work in any field. Yet finding cultural competence here is success worth knowing.

Epilogue

I was raised in Virginia, but my family roots were in the deeper South. In keeping with pre–World War II practice, my mother's people hired "help." As an African American maid, Catharine fit the troubled double standard of the Southern caste system. On the one hand, she assumed a role that assured her emotional intimacy with the white members of the household. On the other, she was required to remember her place. Thus, she was a friend, confidante, and caretaker, who simultaneously remained silent when visitors appeared, always used the back door, took her meals separately, and deferred to the whims and wishes of her employers.

By the summer of 1972 I had reached the age that a learner's permit allowed me the supervised privilege of sitting behind the wheel, as I did when we vacationed in my mother's hometown. She planned a visit to Catharine, and I served as chauffeur. The heat was sweltering as we sat in a small but tidy house shaded on one side by a large stand of bamboo. We sipped freshly brewed iced tea as the afternoon lingered, and their talk gradually turned to the possibility of a longer visit. Catharine could take the train to Virginia to spend time with us. Plans developed, dates were considered, and as the reality unfolded she looked at my mother and said, "Miss Olivia, you have a colored family where I can stay?"

My mother responded politely but with a firmness that I knew all too well. "Nonsense, Catharine. You'll stay with us." In return, Catharine gave my mother a reproving stare and said in a soft voice tinged with an equal firmness, "No, no, Miss Olivia. I raised you better than that." For her, it would have been unthinkable for a "colored" woman

to share the home of a white family as an equal. Talk of the visit quickly ended, and the conversation turned in other directions. These two strong women continued to exchange cards and letters but were destined never to meet again.

How does a vignette about racial segregation in the Old South serve as the epilogue to a book on cultural effectiveness with the Amish? I believe it neatly summarizes the dilemma providers face between respecting and accepting the views of those with whom they interact.

This story can be analyzed any number of ways, but one difficult truth applies particularly well. These two women did not struggle with misunderstanding. At both cultural and emotional levels, each empathized with the other's position quite well. It was 1972. Both had experienced the turmoil of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. And for many years before that, both had lived within a carefully constructed social order that identified an inferior "place" for African Americans. The same dilemma they faced applies in professional roles with the Amish. It is not that providers are unable to empathize with the position of the other party. That emotional and cultural hurdle can be leaped. The dilemma comes in finding a successful resolution to the problems remaining in respecting widely differing beliefs. In many cases there are no simple solutions to such complex problems. In the preceding chapters I offered suggestions on effective interaction styles with the Amish, responses to problems that commonly arise, lessons culled from the experience of fellow professionals with whom I work in Amish communities, and my own trial-and-error efforts. Yet none of these skills will work if as professionals we do not respect the fundamental beliefs of the Amish community.

One belief is inviolable and remains essential to working with the Amish in any profession: the primacy of the group. They will remain committed to the cohesion of their communities whatever changes occur, drawing new lines of separation from the world as needed. To understand this basic premise is to accept the realities of providing a service. Whether this book serves as primer, refresher, or research for those who know their communities well, without that understanding true service cannot proceed.

Several years ago I agreed to meet with a reporter from a national broadcasting company. She interviewed me multiple times, and I placed her in touch with several progressive members of an Amish community. She was particularly interested in "seeing" the locations where adolescents in Rumspringa held parties, and I made arrangements for one youth, still in that period, to serve as our guide. She was stunned when I tossed him the keys to my car, despite our discussion of the varied ways Rumspringa plays out in different locales. As we walked to a restaurant in a nearby town on our last evening together, she pointed to a passing buggy and said with exasperation, "I *still* don't understand how they are separate from the world!"

This was an intelligent, insightful woman. She had asked the "right" questions across the course of our time together, met with the "right" people, and been handed multiple opportunities to begin the journey of understanding. Yet she could not move past her own entrenched views of what "should be."

Over the years the "team" of people with whom I have been privileged to interact professionally has included my late wife, a community health nurse who initiated polio vaccinations in an Amish community that resisted them. I have worked with Child Protective Services caseworkers with the unenviable task of removing Amish children from their homes as a matter of safety. And I have worked with school social workers, mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, domestic violence counselors, probation officers, attorneys, law enforcement personnel, nurses, and physicians. In each case I had the opportunity to learn from their perspectives and view the Amish through a different lens. Those who are successful in their work move past their entrenched beliefs about what "should be."

Providers face the same crossroad at the end of this book. I hope that it has offered helpful perspectives on understanding and working with the Amish. Yet a text cannot substitute for a willingness to suspend judgment and to struggle with one's own beliefs about what is "right" in human relationships and moral values. A book cannot substitute for a willingness to believe that views that are fundamentally different from one's own have an intrinsic worth for the people who believe them. The experiences shared in this book are not academic exercises. They embody powerful, exhausting, and at times gut-wrenching struggles necessary to understand and be understood by a people whose commitment to a lifestyle is alter-

nately awe-inspiring and exasperating to those on the outside. At best, I hope these writings serve as a springboard to begin or deepen an understanding of the Amish way of life.

Catharine's story also offers a window into my views as an author. Across my life-span, its meaning has changed. When I was young and absolutely sure that I knew right from wrong, it was a chilling lesson in the horrors of prejudice and social injustice. At some point after receiving my graduate degree in psychology, it morphed into a reminder of the often subtle and pervasive nature of trauma. And today as I write, while those meanings have not abated, it also serves as a powerful reminder that good, kind, and compassionate people can maintain strongly differing views on social justice. Whether one is "right" or "wrong" matters far less than finding a way to respect one another in the process.

APPENDIX A

A Quick Guide to Other Plain Groups

Distinct groupings of Anabaptists have waxed and waned over the centuries since the movement emerged during the Protestant Reformation in sixteenth-century Europe. In the early twenty-first century, four major branches continue to flourish—Amish, Brethren, Hutterites, and Mennonites. Because of their distinctive plain dress, Amish and Hutterites are sometimes referred to as Plain people. There are also contingents of more traditional plain-dressing people within the Brethren and Mennonite groups as well as a few other plain-dressing "look-alikes" that deserve mention.

Brethren

Originally called German Baptist Brethren, this sect was also nicknamed "Dunkers" or "Dunkards" for their practice of adult baptism by immersion. Emerging in Germany in the early 1700s, the Brethren are actually a branch grafted onto the Anabaptist tree because their theology was strongly influenced by the beliefs and practices of both radical Pietism and Anabaptists. Numerous North American Brethren groups trace their roots to these early German origins.

Most Brethren no longer wear plain clothing. However, a traditional subgroup known as the Old German Baptist Brethren are often confused with the Amish because they wear distinctive plain clothing and the men grow beards. Another group, the Old Order River Brethren (a traditional community within the Brethren in Christ denomination) look very similar to the Old German Baptist Brethren in their appearance, with their plain clothing and beards. Both groups allow motorized vehicles, electricity from the grid, higher education, and somewhat limited use of online services. These two groups in particular are frequently misidentified as Amish by outsiders on the basis of their wearing apparel.

Hutterites

This group descends directly from the early Anabaptist movement and is distinguished by its economic communalism. The Hutterites reject private property and cluster in rural colonies composed of approximately one hundred individuals (both adults and children). They wear distinctive dress, but unlike the Amish they fully

embrace high technology because it is owned and operated communally. Their name derives from one of their early leaders, Jakob Hutter, a martyr who was burned alive as a heretic in the mid-1500s. In twenty-first-century North America, they have some five hundred colonies, the majority in the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, and a smaller number in South Dakota and Montana.

Mennonites

"Mennonite" is an umbrella term for more than 150 different groups in North America, with European lineage in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, and the Netherlands. Beginning in the last half of the twentieth century, their churches have seen an increasing ethnic diversity that includes Asian and Hispanic members. Like the Brethren, the majority of Mennonites no longer dress in plain clothing, nor are they a collective society.

Of greatest interest in sorting out the different plain-dressing peoples are the most traditional Old Order Mennonites. There are two primary groups of Old Orders: those who rely on horse and buggy for transportation, similar to the Amish, and those who use motorized vehicles. The "horse and buggy Mennonites," as they are nicknamed, also speak Pennsylvania German, but they are distinguished from the Amish by their appearance. Mennonite men do not wear beards, and women are more likely to use fabrics with patterns or designs. They also hold church services in meetinghouses rather than homes and use electricity from the grid. They prohibit the use of television and online services.

Beachy Amish and Amish Mennonites

Although for historical reasons the word "Amish" appears in their names, these two groups do not embrace many key Amish practices. Although many of their members hail from Amish backgrounds, the Beachy Amish and various Amish Mennonite churches reflect divisions within the Amish church in the twentieth century in which members left to form more "progressive" churches that now worship in church buildings and permit the use and ownership of motor vehicles. These groups do not speak Pennsylvania German, and their views on plain dress, higher education, evangelism, interaction with the outside world, and advanced technology are far more liberal than their Amish counterparts.

Still other religious groups have some theological affinity with the Amish but are not Anabaptist or "plain." Four groups—Friends ("Quakers"), Amana Colonies, Moravians, and Shakers—each have some similarity to the Amish in either beliefs or practices. This may include a historic effort to maintain a simple lifestyle, separation from the world, or an emphasis on pacifism. However, none of these groups emerged from Anabaptist roots, nor do they have any direct historical or religious affiliation with the Amish. Of the four, the first three continue to attract members, but the Shakers are no longer in existence.

APPENDIX B

Mental Health Diagnoses and the Amish

One of the most frequently used sources for mental health diagnoses in the United States is the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, now in its fifth edition (DSM-5).[1] The latest revision continues a trend toward evidence- and behavior-based criteria. The evidence-based requirement improves the reliability of diagnoses across settings and assures that research protocols, particularly those designed to assess interventions, are treating the same mental disorder. The use of behavior-referenced criteria assumes that a unique "set" of cognitions, behaviors, or otherwise observable or inferred symptoms are specific to a disorder and that any patient presenting with the diagnosis will exhibit a sufficient subset of these symptoms to qualify as manifesting the disorder itself.

This categorization system is, first, as valid as the diagnostic constructs that are being measured and, second, as reliable or accurate as the criteria that comprise each clinical syndrome. The issue of cultural relevance has been addressed here more than in any preceding DSM. Still, no system can fully address the impact of cultural manifestations on specific clinical syndromes. Of primary concern with an Amish client is the challenge to adequately and accurately diagnose while taking into consideration the cultural impact on behaviors or symptoms.

Interviewing an Amish client involves an inevitable social matrix, which is often present in the form of supportive family and community expectations. In gathering data, adults trump children in speaking, and once in adulthood, older trumps younger. Male trumps female, and clergy (bishop or minister) trumps layperson. Such rules are not inviolable, depending on the personalities involved and the anxiety of the moment. Unlike their English counterparts, the Amish may mask their annoyance or perturbation when someone speaks out of turn or shares information that those higher on the hierarchy believe should not have been shared. That does not mean such censure may not present or felt by the client. It is merely unspoken in front of outsiders. Professionals working with Amish people should respect and work within this matrix as much as possible.

Clients often mute their own symptoms, describing emotional pain in pastel shades rather than in vibrant colors. However, this dynamic can also reverse as the client confesses terrible and willful behavior in the extreme. The family may acqui-

esce in the effort to minimize distress or, paradoxically, may paint a vivid portrait of outrageous or unacceptable behavior, either supporting or denying the client's description. In either case, the narrative all too often represents an anxiety-based presentation designed to accommodate the Amish belief system rather than a more accurate description of an emotional or psychological state. The origin of this descriptive bias is culturally based.

Although attitudes toward emotional distress and mental illness are changing, many continue to believe that these are consequences visited by God as punishment for a lack of faith. Some also believe in "generational sin," the theological principle that the sins of the parents are visited on the children, crossing generations. Emotional or psychological suffering, then, is not only distressing in its own right but can symbolize a lack of faith or a family's failure to live a godly life. In these cases embarrassment can lead to an effort to downplay symptoms or a distressing confession of personal failure.

Many Amish people also believe in the worth of suffering as modeled by Jesus. If the Savior voluntarily experienced the ultimate pain of a slow and painful death, should his followers complain about the comparatively minimal suffering they experience? If assistance is offered, they will accept it, but to make an overt complaint about their condition is to lack a humble acceptance of the lot that life has bestowed upon them. Likewise, families may believe that it is inappropriate to share complaints about the well-being of a member and may minimize or even deny the emotional pain they observe.

The opposite approach can be observed when the individual feels trapped, believing that psychological pain or emotional distress is a punishment, or is brought by Satan, and feels helpless to overcome it. In this case the counselor serves a role of surrogate clergy, in essence hearing the confession of a tormented soul who longs to be free of a haunting pain that has not been relieved by the traditional spiritual avenues available. If the family describes the individual as severely distressed, it can be a means of calling attention to the fact that the problem is not theirs. The unspoken message as members describe the painful, outrageous, or uncontrolled behavior of the client is "We're okay—he (or she) needs fixing!" This distancing can be dictated by the real or imagined scrutiny of the church or broader community, whose criticism is to be avoided.

Even when the counselor adjusts to (a) a high-context culture, in which much information is assumed but not verbally shared, (b) the slower paced give-and-take of an interview with Amish clients, (c) the muted or exaggerated description of symptoms, and (d) placing symptomatology in the context of Amish culture, difficulties remain in determining an appropriate diagnosis.

For example, symptoms of depression can vary from expectations. A hallmark of severe depression is suicidal ideation. Many clients acknowledge the thought, if not the intent, of ending their lives, either as an escape from emotional pain or in response to hopelessness about the future. In contrast, relatively few Amish clients allow themselves to openly express this avenue of relief. Life may be unbearable, but they give no indication that thoughts of self-harm intrude into their cognitions.

The strong spiritual taboo against such behavior and the explicit assumption of eternal separation from God create a mental firewall against conscious awareness of these thoughts. Likewise, the lethargy or fatigue common to depression, which often results in withdrawal or a lack of motivation, is more difficult to observe in Amish clients. The Amish value physical labor. Their chosen lifestyle imposes a physically demanding regimen on day-to-day activities for every family member, from children through older adults, making such anergia more difficult to observe. Furthermore, the Amish emphasis on humility can hide anhedonia or disinterest in normally pleasurable pursuits. The counselor is therefore hard-pressed to accurately gauge the severity, duration, and frequency of depressive episodes.

In the same way, manic, and more particularly hypomanic behavior, can be difficult to diagnose. The value placed on the work ethic means that hypomania manifested in increased physical labor will often be accepted or even rewarded rather than viewed askance. Manic behaviors frequently present in muted form, lacking the grandiosity that is a hallmark symptom in the mainstream culture. This may well be an artifact of the emphasis on humility taught from cradle to grave among the Amish, but whatever the cause, unless presenting with overt psychosis, mania can easily be underdiagnosed.

The presentation of schizophrenia is more readily diagnosed based on positive symptoms (i.e., auditory and visual hallucinations, delusions), but negative symptoms (e.g., affective flattening, social withdrawal) may be more difficult to discern. In part this occurs because of the emphasis on humility, and in part because social withdrawal is often less pronounced among large families and the collective society that marks the Amish. A client who experiences a florid psychotic episode is relatively easily diagnosed if he or she is willing to acknowledge the hallucinatory or delusional experiences. Not all are. For at least some, the illusory voices and delusions develop a spiritual basis, and they remain reluctant to share these with a counselor who is not Amish and thus may not understand. In other cases, when the hallucinations are ego-dystonic, the insulting, profane, or sexually suggestive comments can be sufficiently embarrassing that the client is reluctant to share them. In these cases family may be the best source of information, but again caveats about minimizing or exaggerating symptoms are important.

Anxiety disorders can be a troubling confession because of their implied failure to trust God. An Amish bishop once described his sense of peace while watching a tornado pass near his home. If he or members of his family died, they had the hope of salvation. If the house or any outbuildings were destroyed, they were material possessions and could be replaced. There was no reason to fear any event that occurs on earth, for God the Father provides for his children. Practicing such cognitions is common for the Amish, a form of self-talk that closely resembles cognitive therapy in its efforts to reframe and minimize anxiety. However, it is much more common to use such self-talk reflexively, even in interview situations, rather than probe for and explore underlying feelings of discomfort. Thus anxiety is difficult to gauge in severity, duration, and frequency.

Perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse against children or domestic violence

against women also manifest cultural differences. Because they may have confessed in church prior to seeing a mental health professional and possibly have been placed under the ban for at least a time as a consequence of their sin, they may now feel that their sin is forgiven and forgotten. The need to revisit these behaviors with an English counselor is not only resented from the perspective of addressing embarrassing personal behavior but also from a cultural perspective by violating the sanctity of the process of confession and repentance. Diagnostic interviewing that intertwines the beginning of an intervention to confront the offender's denial may elicit initial compliance, but ultimately may drive a wedge between the client and future treatment. Instead a more passive approach, listening and empathizing with the client's perception of forgiveness within the Amish community, can be a useful tool to create an alliance that elicits more information than would otherwise be the case and to further future treatment.

Counselor gender is also a consideration. Male counselors carry more authority than female counselors, and older male counselors carry the greatest authority of all. This does not mean that a young female counselor cannot command respect. It does mean that her role will require more time to develop, particularly in cross-gender counseling, and to a lesser extent with older females. These are unspoken expectations. Rarely will an Amish client address these concerns directly.

Very little work has been done with assessment tools and Amish clients. Knabb completed research supporting the validity of both the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory–III (MCMI-III) and the Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory–2 (MMPI-2) as workable instruments with an Amish population.[2] However, in a clinical setting he notes the difficulty of prolonged response times, often as much as three or four hours, for some respondents to complete the MMPI-2, and comparable difficulties with completion of the MCMI-III.[3] Therefore, the practical application of these inventories may be limited for the professional needing real-time results. Furthermore, as he notes in his article, the MMPI-2 has now been modified, and the Restructured Format is in use.

A medical example culled from the literature demonstrates the difficulties that occur in diagnosing an Amish client.[4] In 2001, a case study describes a history in which an unmarried male developed HIV infection via a blood transfusion. Since he was to be married, professionals took appropriate steps to inform both the patient and his fiancée of the risk in unprotected sexual intercourse, including their bishop in these discussions. Although the personnel involved believed that families, ministry, and the couple understood the risk of sexual contact, the wife became pregnant after the marriage. Husband, wife, and child were all found to be infected with HIV Disease.

The story is tragic in its own right, but if a mental health professional were asked to diagnose, what would be appropriate? Dependent Personality Disorder? On whose part? Husband, who submitted to the expectations of the church that protected sex was a sin? Or wife, who submitted to the views of her husband? And would such a diagnosis be culturally correct? Would one anticipate depression or anxiety on the part of these who struggled with difficult decisions? And if so, would

Adjustment Disorders be the appropriate diagnoses? Or more pervasive depressive and anxiety experiences? And even if these diagnoses were applied, how would they have assisted with goal-setting or treatment interventions?

As the story implies, diagnosis with an Amish client is predicated on numerous factors that we may not need to consider in mainstream culture or that we must view through a different lens. Certainly, the purpose of formal diagnoses and assessment techniques in treatment intervention requires a second look.

APPENDIX C

Suggestions for Further Reading

Scholarly Sources

The Amish, by Donald B. Kraybill, Karen M. Johnson-Weiner, and Steven M. Nolt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

This definitive twenty-two chapter book provides a sweeping overview of Amish life and culture in North America. A scholarly and comprehensive study, it is written in an accessible style.

A History of the Amish, revised and updated by Steven M. Nolt (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003).

This readable book provides the best introduction to the history of the Amish in Europe and North America.

The Amish Way: Patient Faith in a Perilous World, by Donald Kraybill, Steven M. Nolt, and David Weaver-Zercher (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010).

This introduction to Amish religion and spirituality interprets their worldview as well as specific faith practices.

An Amish Paradox: Diversity and Change in the World's Largest Amish Community, by Charles E. Hurst and David L. McConnell (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

The authors explore continuity and change of Amish values and practices in the large Amish community in the Holmes County, Ohio, settlement.

Growing Up Amish: The Rumspringa Years, 2nd edition, by Richard A. Stevick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

The author explores the transitional stage of Amish life between childhood and ultimate assimilation into the community from social, cultural, and psychological aspects.

Plain Diversity: Amish Cultures and Identities, by Steven M. Nolt and Thomas J. Meyers (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

This book is a specific examination of nineteen Amish settlements in Indiana, focusing on the diversity found there and the impact of these differences on Amish life and interactions.

Train Up a Child: Old Order Amish and Mennonite Schools, by Karen M. Johnson-Weiner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

The author explores the ideological principles underlying private schools among the Amish, explaining in depth the pedagogy, curriculum, textbooks, and even school design that maintains the dominant influence of the community and separates these children from the world.

Amish Primary Sources

The three correspondence newspapers listed below are published in English and circulate widely in the Amish world. They consist of letters written by Amish scribes who report recent activities in their communities. Typical topics include the weather, community gatherings, accidents, ordination of leaders, and comments on various local and national events. These publications offer a unique perspective into the everyday life of Amish communities. Subscriptions are available to the public.

The Budget (weekly) is published in Sugarcreek, Ohio. 134 North Factory Street, PO Box 249, Sugarcreek, OH 44681. Ph: (330) 852-4634.

Die Botschaft (weekly) is published in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. 420 Weaver Road, Millersburg, PA 17061.

The Diary (monthly) is published in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. PO Box 77, Bart, PA 17503. Ph: (717) 529-3938.

The following magazines, printed in English, are published by Pathway Publishers (an Amish publisher) located in Ontario. Route 4, Aylmer, ON N5H 2R3, Canada. Indiana address: 2580N–250W, LaGrange, IN 46761.

Family Life (monthly) is a family and community magazine which covers many topics related to Amish faith and practices.

Blackboard Bulletin (monthly) is a magazine that provides resources for teachers in Amish private schools.

Formerly Amish Authors

Why I Left the Amish, by Saloma Miller Furlong (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2011).

This memoir describes the author's experience growing up in a dysfunctional Amish family in Ohio with a father who is mentally disabled. She describes her decision to leave and the challenge of adjusting to mainstream culture.

Growing Up Amish, by Ira Wagler (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011).

Wagler, who grew up in an Iowa Amish community, describes his teen and young adult years. He explores the angst he experienced when deciding whether or not to join the church. After leaving the community and returning several times, he eventually decides to leave.

Media Sources

The Amish, A Sarah Colt Production for *American Experience* (PBS). First aired in 2012.

A documentary describing the Amish experience in America. Many stories are narrated by the Amish themselves as they explain both the cultural and spiritual values that shape their lives in the twenty-first century.

Notes

Chapter 1. Strangers and Pilgrims

1. Following Amish usage, I employ masculine terminology for deity here.

2. "Amish Population Change 2008–2013."

3. Steven Nolt (2003) has written a readable and thorough history of the Amish.

4. Consult Kraybill, Nolt, and Johnson-Weiner (2013) for a comprehensive introduction to the Amish of North America.

5. For an in-depth description of Amish religion and spirituality, see Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher (2010).

6. Amish Population Trends 2012.

7. See Hostetler (1993, 77–83) for a description of the service of baptism; Wittmer (2010, 96–100) for preparation for a church service in the home; and Meyers and Nolt (2005, 72–75) for the ritual steps of a worship service.

8. Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt (2013, 137–54) describe the formation, significance, and distinction of some forty Amish affiliations.

9. Numerous studies focus on Amish settlements in regions or states. The more recent and comprehensive include Meyers and Nolt (2005) and Nolt and Meyers (2007) on the Indiana communities; Hurst and McConnell (2010) on the Holmes County Ohio settlement; and Johnson-Weiner (2010) on Amish communities in New York State.

10. Found in Matthew 22:21 as well as in two other gospels. Biblical phrases are in the King James Version, which the Amish use alongside Martin Luther's German translation.

11. See Yoder 2003.

12. For essays on various conflicts with the state in the twentieth century, consult Kraybill 2003. Johnson-Weiner (2007) offers a history and comparison of Amish private schools in various communities.

13. Zook 2003.

14. Olshan (2003) traces the development and functions of the Amish National Steering Committee.

15. Hostetler 1993, 234–51.

16. Paul Kline, "Gelassenheit," unpublished notes, Holmes County, Ohio, no date. Kline is a retired business owner and a deacon in the New Order Amish church. For more on Gelassenheit, see Cronk (1981) and Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt (2013, 59–114).

Chapter 2. Changing Views of Human Services

1. The story of Lucy Hochstetler's treatment, as well as a progressive history of Amish perceptions of mental health services from that point to the present day, is well documented in Nolt's (2011) article.

2. For powwowing, see Kriebel 2007.

3. Hall 1976.

4. A recent study of college professors found biologists and psychologists the least religious. Among psychologists surveyed, 50% espoused atheistic beliefs, while another 11% were agnostic (Gross and Simmons 2009). The study did not survey practicing clinicians, nor did it attempt to account for geographic differences (anecdotal evidence suggests psychologists in rural areas where Amish are located are more likely to be religious), but it does reflect the type of information that finds its way into the popular press and influences Amish views of psychologists.

5. Johnson-Weiner 2007.

6. Nolt 2011.

7. A brochure for Harmony Haven Home states its mission: "a Christ-centered rehabilitation program especially designed to assist male members of the Amish community who suffer from: (1) mental illness; (2) immoral and compulsive obsessions; (3) uncontrolled emotional conflicts; (4) unresolved spiritual and marital problems. This program may last up to nine months." Classes include devotions and discipleship time. The program is similar to other Amish residential programs in its description and proposed length of time ("Harmony Haven Home" brochure, n.d.; "Visitor's Guidelines, Harmony Haven Home," n.d.).

8. Steven M. Nolt, personal correspondence, January 2009.

9. People Helpers Meeting notes are generally transcribed and published, either in annual or compiled form. See *People Helpers Meetings*, May 1998 to July 2000.

10. *Family Life*, January 2003, 10–13. Also see the responses to this article in *Family Life*, April 2003, "Staff Notes," 8–9, "That Our Hurts May Be Healed" (letters), 10–18, and "Bind Up the Brokenhearted" (a rebuttal article), 19–21.

11. *Family Life*, January 2013, 32–34.

Chapter 3. Building and Maintaining Rapport

1. This assessment also eventually led to an article on the challenges of testing with this group (Cates and Graham 2002).

2. The fact that the Amish are almost a law unto themselves can be seen in Amish "tell-all" books that frame the culture from the view of those who wrench themselves away. Three that stand out are Saloma Miller Furlong's *Why I Left the Amish* (2011); Ira Wagler's *Growing Up Amish* (2011); and Lucinda Streiker-Schmidt's *A Separate God: Journal of an Amish Girl* (2008).

3. Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher 2010; Trollinger 2012; Umble and Weaver-Zercher 2008.

4. For purposes of brevity, the term "client" is used here, although "patient," "consumer" "probationer," etc., may equally well apply.

5. Johnson-Weiner 2007.

6. Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher 2010, 45–58.

7. Cates 2011.

Chapter 4. Across the Life Span

1. Olshan 1990, 185–96.

2. Cates 2005.

3. Johnson-Weiner 2007, 21–39.

4. Reiling 2002.

5. The Amish Youth Vision Project, Topeka, Indiana, completed an unpublished article in June 2007: Seth Gibson, "'Gang' Prevalence and Involvement among Old Order Amish Youth in the Elkhart-LaGrange Settlement."

6. The story was carried by multiple media outlets; for example, see "Amish Are Facing Modern Vice in Drug Case," *New York Times*, July 3, 1998.

7. *The Devil's Playground* was released in 2001 by Stick Figure Productions, New York. Lucy Walker directed this film.

8. One of the first groups was the Eagles, formed by a concerned couple in December 1998. Approximately 50 percent of the "gangs" in Lancaster County were parent-supervised by 2000. Information taken from a letter of concern dated December 1998 and Minutes of the Eagle Parent Meeting, September 19, 2000.

9. Weber, Cates, and Carey 2010.

10. Kraybill 2001, 80–110.

11. For the record: on the two beers consumed, he did *not* vomit.

12. Richard Stevick 2007, 173–228.

13. In a study of nearly 300 Amish women of childbearing age in the Lancaster community, Miller et al. (2007) found that 21 percent were using some means of artificial birth control.

14. Igou 1999, 193–206.

Chapter 5. Women's Issues

1. Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt 2013, 194.

2. To my knowledge, there is no database that consistently follows the gender of those who choose not to be baptized into the church. Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher (2010, 49) state that 90 percent of Amish youth eventually join the church. There are no known statistics available on the number leaving the church after baptism, but it is a very small number.

3. Pauline Stevick 2006.

4. Reynolds (2001) describes the changing role of women in another closely aligned Plain group. However, the similarities in roles and functions are compatible with those of the Amish.

5. Kraybill, Johnson-Weiner, and Nolt 2013.

6. Thanks to Chris Weber for coining this phrase.

7. Ali et al. 2008.

8. Baldwin and Keelan 1999.

9. Johnson-Weiner 2001.

10. Richards, Rollerson, and Phillips 1991.

11. Scholer 1996.

12. The story is taken from a booklet titled *The Doorway to Hope*, published by The Sewing Circle, a group of Amish women who address domestic violence. Available from P.O. Box 191, Topeka, IN 46571.

13. Stoltzfus 1994, 118–19.

Chapter 6. Sexuality

1. I have mentioned previously that the Amish experience difficulties with English idioms. I provided this vignette to the man whose story it is to make sure it was sufficiently disguised. As a result, I spent a not insignificant amount of time also explaining the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, and how the reference applied in this context.

2. Marin 2009.

3. Eaklor 2011.

4. This attitude may be changing. With the reelection of Barack Obama as president, the gay marriage agenda has become a prominent concern among some Amish.

5. Nicolosi 2004.

6. Schrock-Shenk 2007.

7. Both of these brochures are anonymous and undated, location unknown.

8. Amish parents with an unmarried daughter are sometimes pitied for the humiliation of "hitching up the double buggy" to attend church—a reference to the need to take the larger buggy for their still-extended family at a time when their children should be married and living apart.

9. *Healing from Sexual Sin*, published by Healing Journey, Topeka, IN, n.d.

10. Jeglic, Mercado, and Levenson 2012.

Chapter 7. Violence and Abuse

1. The single "Hey Joe" was released in the United States by *The Jimi Hendrix Experience* on May 1, 1967.

2. Stover, Meadow, and Kaufman 2009; Hilton, Harris, and Rice 2010.

3. See, for example, Jill Davis, "Advocacy Beyond Leaving: A Guide for Domestic Violence Advocates," 2011.

4. Miller et al. 2007.

5. Schafer, Caetano, and Clark 1998.

6. Fals-Stewart et al. 2002.

7. McCloskey and Walker 2000; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000.

8. National Network to End Domestic Violence 2011.

9. Jouriles et al. 2012.

10. Horwitz et al. 2009.

11. Fals-Stewart and Clinton-Sherrod 2009; Kachadourian et al. 2012.

12. Recall that Amish congregations (districts) have specific physical boundaries. There is some leeway in attending churches in other districts, but generally an Amish church member is required to participate in the ritual activities (baptism, members meetings, communion, discipline) in the church district in which she lives.

13. The Amish in America: New Identities & Diversities, June 7–9, 2007, The Young Center of Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania.

14. Sewing Circle 2010.
15. Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services 2010.
16. Tolin and Foa 2008.
17. Gonzales et al. 2012.
18. Kiser, Baumgardner, and Dorado 2010.
19. Gupta et al. 2011.
20. English, Edelson, and Herrick 2005.
21. van Wesel, Boeije, and Alisic 2012.
22. This story was published in *Doorway to Hope*.
23. For the story of this episode and the Amish response, see Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher 2007.
24. Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher 2007, chapter 11.

Chapter 8. Death and Loss

1. For more on this incident, see Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher 2007.
2. Wittmer 2010, 137–38.
3. Hostetler 1993; Kraybill, Nolt, and Johnson-Weiner 2013.
4. Shapiro 1995.
5. Abeles, Victor, and Delano-Wood 2004.
6. Stroebe 2001.
7. Rogers et al. 2008; Wijngaards-de Meij et al. 2005.
8. Bonanno et al. 2005; Wing et al. 2001.
9. See, for example, Mackall 2007; Wagler 2011.
10. In some affiliations the ban on eating together is handled by placing two tables within inches of each other and then covering both with a single tablecloth. The shunned member then sits at a "separate" table, following the letter of the law.
11. See, for example, "Mission to Amish People" at www.mapministry.org.

Chapter 9. Counseling and Psychotherapy

1. The Amish use "counselor" as an umbrella term for a variety of mental health professionals who practice therapy; in deference, it is used in the same way here.
2. Bozrath, Zimring, and Tausch 2002; Zimring and Raskin 1992.
3. Rogers 1957.
4. Bozrath 1997.
5. Kirschenbaum and Jourdan 2005.
6. Knight 2007.
7. Brown 2010.
8. Sue 2003.

Chapter 10. Substance Abuse and Addictions

1. Nolt 2003.
2. In particular, some of the Swiss communities in Indiana observe comparatively lax attitudes toward alcohol use.

3. CNN.com, "Drug Case Breaks Amish Peace," July 2, 1998, www.cnn.com/US/9807/01/amish.unholy.alliance.

4. *The Plain Dealer*, "Methamphetamine Seeps into Idyllic Amish Counties in Ohio," May 7, 2011, http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2011/05/methamphetamine_seeps_into_idy.html.

5. Cates and Weber 2012.

6. Devor 1994.

7. Miller 1993.

8. Granfield and Cloud 2007.

9. Weber, Cates, and Carey 2010.

10. Stick Figure Productions: New York (www.stickfigureproductions.com).

11. The Vision Project classes have found an interesting paradox in this regard. If the Amish co-leader uses obscenity or profanity, it then becomes an acceptable social norm of the group to do so.

12. For a discussion of harm reduction and adolescents, see Kelly 2012.

13. The letter to parents is a violation of statutes regarding confidentiality for any alcohol and drug class member over the age of 18 and may also be a violation for those under 18, depending on interpretation of federal statutes. It also advocates for the client in the most ethical manner possible, respecting cultural expectations.

14. Cates and Weber 2013.

15. Anonymous Lancaster, PA letter dated December 1998 from "A Concerned Family." This letter documents the efforts of other parents to provide structure and avoid alcohol and drug use among Amish teens in the area for the past two years.

Chapter 11. Law Enforcement and the Judiciary

1. Toch 2012.

2. Nolt 2003, 20–21.

3. Hurst and McConnell 2010; R. Stevick 2007.

4. These stories have the feel of "rural legend." Regrettably, they are both true.

5. "Amish farmer targeted by FDA raids shuts down raw milk business," NBC News, Feb. 15, 2012, http://usnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/02/05/1393070.

6. "Ohio Amish sect leader, followers found guilty of hate crimes in hair attacks," NBC News, Sept. 20, 2012, http://usnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/2/09/13993070.

7. Byers 2008; Wilson and Ruback 2003.

8. Wesner 2010.

9. "Ohio man sentenced in $17 million Amish fraud case," CBS News, June 13, 2012, www.cbsnews.com/8301-201_162-5742682.

10. "Neglected dogs rescued from Amish puppy mill farm in Ohio," *Chillocothe Gazette*, Oct. 2, 2012, www.chillocothegazette.com/article/2012/1002/NEWS01/210020305?nclick_check=1; "The Pennsylvania Amish Puppy Mill Connection," PetWatch New Jersey, n.d., www/pwnj.org/amish-mills; "Puppy Mills Draw Attention of Elkhart County Commissioners," *Goshen News*, May 1, 2012, http://goshennews.com/breakingnews/x1585736933/.

11. Kraybill 2001.

Chapter 12. Healthcare Professions

1. Graham and Cates 2002.

2. Wittmer 2010, 105; Huntington 2003.

3. Briss 1994; Halpin et al. 1993.

4. Jacobs 2011; Lamparello 2001.

5. Hostetler 1993, 328–34.

6. Hsueh et al. 2007.

7. See http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/maple-syrup-urine-disease.

8. Egeland and Hostetter 1983; Egeland et al. 2012.

9. For more information, see www.clinicforspecialchildren.org/research.html.

10. I am, however, aware of Amish young adults and adolescents who have had LASIK surgery and orthodontia, wear contacts, and have used professional teeth whitening.

11. Miller et al. 2007 reports that 21 percent of child-bearing women in one Amish community were using some form of artificial contraception.

12. Acheson, Campanella, and Korbin 1993.

13. See, for example, Clayton and Kodish 1999.

14. Von Gruenigen et al. 2001.

15. Reiter et al. 2009.

16. See, for example, the website for the International Iridology Association, www.iridologyassn.org.

17. Hall, "Amish Home Burn Treatment: B & W Salve and Burdock Leaves," www.science-based medicine.org.

18. See, for example, Phan, http://mason.gmu.edu/naphan6projects/plants/Burdock.htm#TherapeuticValues.

19. Herring 2012.

20. Alex Dobzinski, "Convicted Amish killer commits suicide, police say," www.reuters.com/article/2011/01/16/us-amish-killer-idUSTRE70F02G20110116.

21. Ferrara 2003.

22. See, for example, *Plain Health*, a newsletter series described in its subtitle as "A publication from Susquehanna Health for patients and friends in the Plain community." It lists health prevention and health care tips, upcoming screenings and visits in the community, and resources offered by the health care program.

Chapter 13. Social Work and Social Services

1.Shedlosky 2007.

2. McConnell and Hurst 2006; Prusak 2008.

3. Letter from an Amish bishop to an Adams County, Indiana, Family Case Manager, February 2009.

4. Kraybill 2001, 131–35.

5. A "private" confession may be as simple as a formal apology. I am aware of one situation in which a couple visited a bishop's home and made their apology for a perceived slight. The bishop simply remarked that "no harm had been done" and forgave them.

6. See, for example, the case of four Amish bishops charged with failure to report child abuse in Missouri in 2009 ("4 MO Amish Bishops Charged with Not Reporting Child Mo-

lester Who Was 'Shunned,'" *Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune*, Nov. 3, 2009). That charge reverberated throughout Amish communities.

7. Herrera 2005.

8. Each agreement is tailored to the specific situation of the offender completing it. Template of the contract received October 2010.

Chapter 14. Guidelines for Service to the Amish

1. Olshan, in a 1990 article titled "The Old Order Amish Steering Committee: A Case Study in Organizational Evolution," provides an excellent analysis of the process of Amish social change.

2. Trollinger 2012.

3. Weaver-Zercher 2001, 152–80.

4. Umble 2008, 221–41.

5. Weaver-Zercher 2013.

6. See, for example, Furlong or Wagler, both 2011.

7. Cates 2011.

8. Kraybill addresses these issues in *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 2001.

Appendix B. Mental Health Diagnoses and the Amish

1. 2013. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: Fifth Edition*, American Psychiatric Association. As of October 2014, *International Classification of Disorders—10* is the preferred coding in the United States. The DSM-V includes these codes as well.

2. Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory–III, Knabb and Vogt, 2011; Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory–2, Knabb, Vogt, and Newgren, 2011.

3. Knabb, personal communication with the author.

4. See Hartman 2001.

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